Modern Evangelism

Raymond W. Cooper

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MODERN EVANGELISM

Modern Evangelism

A PRACTICAL COURSE IN EFFECTIVE EVANGELISTIC METHODS

By
RAYMOND W. COOPER

With Introduction by
CARL E. HERRICK, D.D.
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London: 21 Paternoster Square
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To those who have sowed
and those who have reaped,
labourers all into whose
labours we are entered.

INTRODUCTION

We recognize the truth that there is not and cannot be a modern Evangel. There is but one Evangel and one commission to spread that Evangel. We recognize the truth, likewise, that there are modern methods of doing all kinds of work.

Transportation is the problem of getting from one place to another. It always has been that and always will be, but methods of transportation have changed since the day John Wesley evangelized on horseback. Illumination is the problem of lighting our darkness. It has always been that and always will be. But methods of illumination have changed since the eventful day when Thomas Edison was born. Evangelism is the never-ending and divinely-appointed task of bringing the world to Christ. It has always been that and always will be.

But each generation must find its own method and technique. Our generation is turning to the process that we call Visitation Evangelism. Indeed, it is not so much a turning as a returning. For did not our Lord send His disciples out two by two to proclaim a Kingdom and to seek followers?

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Raymond W. Cooper has shown himself an enthusiastic and successful organizer of this method. He knows people; he knows them where they live; he understands their language; he knows how to win a response. Pastors in churches all over the country will bear witness to the effectiveness of his work. In this book he tells us about it. He writes in it as he talks, with the sincere desire to help his brother pastors everywhere.

This volume is worth reading and pondering. It suggests a door of opportunity to any church. The form of evangelization of which it speaks costs less and accomplishes more than the older methods. It is friendly visitation, with strong emphasis on the friendliness. Like mercy, it is twice blessed; it blesses those who go and those who come.

EVERETT C. HERRICK.

Newton Theological Institution,
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PREFACE

THE need for a comprehensive book on present-day Evangelism has been emphasized at many conferences where the author has spoken on this absorbing subject. Many pastors and laymen have inquired concerning the possibility of obtaining such a volume.

The feeling seems to be that an inclusive treatment of Evangelism by some one actually engaged in influencing thousands of Christians to draw many other thousands of persons to Christ, would be read with acceptance by countless workers, and would have its part in preparing them to harvest a rich fruitage.

This book is an attempt to respond to the requests and suggestions of workers who have co-operated with the author in evangelistic labours.

While realizing that the experiential gives value to any book—indeed, the oldest works on Evangelism were based on experience—the writer has also sought whatever truth he might find in evangelistic literature, both ancient and modern. A list of some of these books will be found on a later page.

The author is especially indebted to Dr. Albert H. Gage, who first suggested the book, more than three

years ago, and whose faith first inspired the setting down in writing of the material in it.

This study in Evangelism is presented to the public in the prayerful hope that it may prove of assistance to all Christian workers.

R. W. C.

Andover, Massachusetts.

CONTENTS

I. Typical Modern Evangelistic Efforts . . 13
   1. In a Small Church
   2. In a Large Church

II. The Evangelism of Jesus 21
   1. Introductory
   2. Evangelistic References in the Four Gospels
   3. Disclosures in Analyzing the References in the Four Gospels

III. The Last Command of Jesus 30

IV. The Evangelism of the First Disciples . 36
   1. Evangelistic References in the Book of The Acts
   2. Disclosures in Analyzing the References in the Book of The Acts

V. The Losses Through Lack of Evangelism . 45

VI. Some Causes of Evangelistic Inactivity . 51

VII. The Need of Adequate Evangelism . . . 62

VIII. Visitation Evangelism 70

IX. The Rebirth of Visitation Evangelism . . 76

X. Reasons for Lay Evangelism 80

XI. Is Evangelistic Visitation Easy? . . . 92

XII. How to Have An Evangelistic Effort . . 96
   1. Overcoming Remaining Obstacles
   2. The Harvest is Always Ready
   3. Workers Are Ready—Use Them

XIII. Special Preparation for the Evangelistic Visitation 102
   1. Preparation of the Leader
   2. Preparation of the Officers and Church Members
   3. Preparation of the Prospects

XIV. Discovering Prospects 116

XV. Special Themes for Evangelistic Preparation 127

1. The Wisdom of Evangelism
2. Assumptions in Lay Evangelism
3. A Clear Conception of the Church
4. The Place of the Bible
5. The Place of Prayer
6. Conversion
7. The Need of Decision
8. The Cross in the Church Members, Not Merely on the Church Building

XVI. Child Conversion 141

XVII. Securing Possible Visitors 149

XVIII. Teaching the Art of Friendly Visitation Evangelism 154

XIX. Concerning Decision 165

1. Reasons for Decision
2. The Growth of a Decision
3. Objections to a Decision

XX. A Demonstration Visit on a Typical Family of Prospects 174

XXI. The Workers at Work 179

1. Securing the Visitors
2. The Necessity of Thorough Organization
3. The Confessions of the Friendly Visitors

XXII. The Fruitage of the Effort 184

XXIII. The Culture of the Converts 186

XXIV. The Evangelistic Church—The Expectation of Jesus 190

I

TYPICAL MODERN EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS

I. IN A SMALL CHURCH

THE telephone rang. A voice said, "I am Pastor Smith, of Woodville. Can you come over and conduct an evangelistic campaign for two weeks, as you have done elsewhere?"

"I am very sorry," was the reply, "but it will be impossible for me to be away from my church for so long a time as that again this year. I would like to be with you, but really cannot in justice to my work here."

He reminded me that I had refused the year before, also. "My people have heard of you, and want you to come. If you do not come, I am through here as pastor; my five years are enough." He hung up.

All that day and night I thought of that earnest but discouraged pastor. To ascertain conditions in that field, I telephoned a mutual friend, who told me the pastor was a good man and worthy of assistance.

The next morning I called him up. "Do your people really want to save souls?" I asked.

"Some of them do," he responded.

"Then I am willing to come over, and conduct a visitation campaign for you, although I can be with you for a few nights only during the week."

"They won't do that."

"How do you know?"

"Because Dr. Jones visited us on that proposition, and they refused to vote for it."

"Do you, as pastor, want it?"

"Yes, but it is useless to consider it."

"And yet if you will follow me, your people will follow you. I suggest that you get your workers and officials and any other interested members to the church next Saturday evening at eight o'clock. It is the only night I have open this week, and although it is a difficult night for me, and for you as pastor, and no doubt for your people to attend, yet it is the only night possible this week, and we must act quickly. Do not tell them why you want them there. Merely say that a most important matter will be presented, and that you are depending on their real interest in the church and your leadership to assure their presence."

As though it were the last straw, he said, "I do not think it will do any good, but I'll try."

On Saturday night about fifteen persons were present. The pastor at once introduced me as a brother pastor whom he had asked to come away from important and fruitful work to meet his leaders, and suggest a proposition for the welfare of his church.

Thus, without any intimation of the nature of my proposition, I proceeded to address them in an informal way, speaking for an hour on the philosophy of a new idea. This aroused their imagination and faith. The spirit of adventure was upon them, the shackle of the rut was being burst asunder by the impulse to

progress. Evil personalities who had overshadowed church business meetings to the silencing of the faithful and the discomfiture of the pastor, were themselves being converted or silenced in this session. The manhood and womanhood of true Christian souls were rising to action.

Carefully I outlined the proposition of a visitation campaign and told them how it had worked elsewhere and that I was willing, on the earnest solicitation of their pastor, to help to put it through, if they were willing to sponsor it. Almost every hand was raised in favour of the proposition, and none against it.

The pastor, having been there five years, as a faithful pastor had accumulated quite a complete list of persons not belonging to or attending any other church. This list was quickly made complete with the assistance of the women who made a community survey. The population of this suburban residential section was small and scattered, no houses being even near the church building. The list of prospective members included only about one hundred and fifty persons.

The pastor signed up twenty persons as friendly visitors. Every night of the following week at six P. M. they met together at the supper table. On Monday and Tuesday I gave instruction in personal work, and the workers were released at eight P. M. to go home and get to bed early. On Wednesday, at seven P. M., they went out in teams of two, to interview the persons assigned to them. I went out that night with one of the young men. Two women and three men decided

for Christ and baptism during our three visits. The workers continued through Thursday and Friday, rested Saturday, went out Sunday afternoon, and the Monday and Tuesday following, after supper together, and on Wednesday they met at supper with the candidates for membership.

Remarks were called for from the workers and converts, and most happy responses were made concerning the experiences of the campaign. It was a joyful time. Jesus was there in spirit and power. The pastor was supremely happy, surrounded by willing workers. He withdrew the resignation which I then learned he had offered the week before, and, moreover, his salary was increased three hundred dollars.

There was gratitude on every hand. Officials admitted their previous scepticism and coldness concerning obeying Jesus in this activity, and told of their radical change in attitude because of the wonderful results of the week's visitation. A man big in mind and heart and body publicly thanked the visiting pastor for calling on him in his home. And don't you suppose we sang the doxology and " Blest be the Tie that Binds " with real meaning and not a few tears of joy?

Some months later I met my young co-visitor and asked about the aftermath and results. He said, " Every one is happy, no bad reaction is in evidence. The congregations are far larger at all the meetings, and fifty-eight have thus far actually joined our church, making a gain on our resident membership of fifty-nine per cent."

There are thousands of churches and communities waiting for such an experience. The following pages show how they may have it in all its fulness, power, beauty, and fruitfulness. If they act, they cannot fail.

The pastor wrote me almost two years afterward, "So far they are holding out well. Our present treasurer, a college man, is one who came at that time. The church finances naturally increased as the result of the increased membership. Those who did the visitation work enjoyed it immensely after the first night. There is no question but that any church will be greatly benefited by such an effort."

II. IN A LARGE CHURCH

No community survey had been made, but the assistant of the pastor had gleaned the names of prospects from the various constituency lists. They knew whom they wanted to win and where these persons could be found.

The director of the movement arrived on Sunday morning to begin a week of edification in the church. Every night throughout the week he preached messages calculated to build up the doctrinal mind, the spiritual life, and the aggressive spirit of the church. This was a revival week, not primarily evangelistic, so that no invitation calling for any public evangelistic decision was given. However, each message ended with an invitation for those persons who had never professed Christ, but who now felt convinced, to make their decision and to inform the pastor at the close of

the service. During the week about twelve persons responded in that way.

Special music was rendered each night by the choir and its individual members. Anything that could not be ordinarily duplicated by the ordinary church force in music, preaching, or otherwise was carefully avoided. The attendance on the first night, which was considered good, increased steadily each night. This growing interest indicated that the general opinion of those who came was that the meetings were instructive, wholesome, invigourating, and beautiful.

Naturally the mood of obedience was enlarged, so that on the following Sunday afternoon, in spite of a heavy rainstorm, one hundred and fifty members came for a two-hour period of instruction in "How to Win People to Christ and the Church." This session was educational, heart searching, and happy, and at the close one hundred people agreed to be visitors in the nightly evangelistic calling during the week beginning the next day.

Around the cruciform table there was an average attendance of eighty persons each night. Men had come directly from their work in offices and factories, wives from homes, youth from study and recreation, all to sit down around the Lord's table to concentrate, be confirmed in the faith, and receive instruction for the work of the night. After the first night the main part of the instruction and inspiration were the reports of those winning decisions the previous nights. Naturally these reports came from the weaker workers as well as from the stronger ones. The consequent

edification and joy were such as could have come in no other way. The remark on every hand was, "This was the greatest week in my life." One hundred and forty-five decisions for membership in the church, most of which were also first decisions for Christ, were made.

Officials who had been sceptical or even antagonistic at the prospect of this movement as well as other progressive suggestions, now began to come to the pastor and either apologize or express deep satisfaction with the effort. They showed an earnest willingness to really support their pastor in the coming days of his leadership. The very men who had been apathetic now made a motion to raise the pastor's salary five hundred dollars, which was gladly voted by the church.

After a few weeks, the pastor, who was attending a church social, went out to the sidewalk with some of the folks to look at a new car which Deacon Henry had bought. As the pastor, with the rest, was fondly admiring it, he discovered that the three initials on it were his own. Amid the delight of the group he realized that this was another token of the esteem of the church for him as their honoured leader in all good works.

Space does not permit the narration of many unique and wonderful experiences on the part of the visitors, or of cases of conversion which were outstanding in their appeal to the church, some of which brought tears of joy to the eyes of members. Nor will we recount the evidences of new life and growth which, as the months passed, were revealed. It is enough that

the reader can live out such experiences for himself and many similar to them if he can succeed in encouraging his church to operate in such a movement. The following pages will form a study of the evangelistic background, development, motive, method, and practical theory which will enable any church, anywhere, at any time, to "go and do likewise."

II

THE EVANGELISM OF JESUS

I. INTRODUCTORY

Jesus is at the centre of the Evangelism of the Bible. He is the life of Evangelism. He is Evangelism incarnate. Evangelism is always a method of God in His approach to man. The Bible is the story of God yearning for the welfare of His creatures. God always works in the interest of humanity, and Jesus says, "I must work the works of him who sent me." Jesus reveals the highest method of the Evangelism of God. His method spread His Gospel in a powerful and rapid manner.

Let us take no man's word as to the method of the Evangelism of Jesus, but with the four Gospels in our hands let us discover it for ourselves in a few hours of wholesome concentration.

On the following pages about every evangelistic reference in the four Gospels is noted. The reader may be interested in the conclusions which follow, although he probably has made his own, some of which are no doubt better than those herein written.

II. EVANGELISTIC REFERENCES IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

1. In Matthew

The first evangelistic reference to Jesus is a sentence

mentioning the fact that He began to preach repentance. And in this sentence no results are indicated (Matt. 4:17).

The second evangelistic reference is five times longer and tells of Jesus winning through the private, personal method four men (Matt. 4:18-22).

Then follow three long chapters which are a sermon of edification to His disciples (Matt. 5, 6, 7).

The next two evangelistic references are also accounts of personal interviews with the scribes and with Matthew (Matt. 8:19, 20; 9:9).

Then come the suggestive sentences: "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of . . . sickness . . . moved with compassion . . . harvest plenteous . . . labourers . . . few . . . pray . . . that . . . send labourers forth. into his harvest. And he called unto him his twelve disciples. . . . These twelve Jesus sent forth" (Matt. 9:35-38; 10:1). This is followed by a strong challenge to consecration.

The next evangelistic reference is a public message of warning to the multitude, with a prayer and that precious invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden."

Most of the recorded messages of Jesus are conversations with His disciples, not with the multitude. Of the few public messages of Jesus most of them dealt with controversial subjects. Large space is given to the healing of individuals among the masses. The final paragraph of the book is an

evangelistic command of Jesus, known as the Great Commission.

2. In Mark

The first evangelistic reference is to the personal winning of Levi. The second reference is to the sending forth of the disciples two by two, in the sixth chapter. There is no other reference in the book to winning anyone until the close, where, just before the ascension, an abbreviated form of the Great Commission is found. Mark is the least evangelistic of the four Gospels, and surprisingly so.

3. In Luke

The first evangelistic reference is to the promise of Jesus, " from henceforth thou shalt catch men." The second reference is to the personal call of Levi, the third is to the sending out of the seventy, two by two, to reap the plenteous harvest, which they did with great joy. The third reference is a private supper conference when Jesus as a guest uttered the parable of the great supper. The fourth reference is a public evangelistic piece of instruction in requirement for decision. The fifth reference is a justification by Jesus for His evangelistic work, wherein He uses the parable of the lost sheep, coin, and son, and the Pharisees scoffed at Him. This brought the evangelistic warning of the parable of Dives and Lazarus. The sixth reference is the personal appeal to the rich ruler, who apparently did not respond. The seventh reference is the turning from the crowd to dine with Zacchæus, Jesus

personally winning him and his family. The eighth reference is the individual conversion of the thief on the cross.

4. In John

The references in John are noted merely because they are more numerous: 1. John's evangelistic work. 2. A more intimate narration of the personal way in which Andrew and another disciple were won by Jesus, and how Andrew won Peter. 3. The personal winning of Philip by Jesus, who immediately won Nathanael. 4. The believing of many because of the signs that He did; "but Jesus did not trust himself unto them." 5. The private conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus, of whom there is no evidence that he ever confessed Christ, remaining one of the leaders among the enemies of Jesus in the Sanhedrin. 6. ". . . and there he (Jesus) tarried with them, and baptized," no mention being made as to how the converts were won.

7. The winning by Jesus of the woman at the well, who in turn won many of the people in that city through her testimony. 8. A description by Jesus to His disciples of the evangelistic field, and the explanation of a law of reaping. 9. The belief of the nobleman whose son Jesus cured, and the belief of the whole family. 10. Another public justification and warning to the Pharisees, which may be considered an evangelistic message, although no converts are indicated. 11. The evangelistic response of Jesus to the question of some of the multitude which followed Him in their

boats, in which He chides them for following Him because of the loaves and the fishes, instead of higher motives. There is no evidence of conversions at this time.

12. The evangelistic message of Jesus in the synagogue, which apparently gained no disciples, but did lose many of them. 13. Public messages of evangelistic instruction by Jesus in the temple, when many of the multitude again believed on Him, in a way, as a worker in signs, but not as the Christ. 14. A public evangelistic appeal of Jesus which made a division in the crowd at the temple, with no decisions mentioned. 15. A conversation by Jesus in the temple with a large number of Jews, many of whom believed on Him as He proceeded, but not truly so, for presently they turned against Him, so that He disappeared from them. 16. The personal winning, by Jesus, of the blind man. 17. A public evangelistic message, by Jesus to the Pharisees, on the sheep-fold and the good shepherd, which resulted in division concerning Him, but with no mention of conversions. 18. A repetition of the previous experience.

19. Narration of the belief of many who apparently conferred with Jesus in His retreat beyond Jordan. 20. The personal confession of Martha to Jesus. 21. The belief of many who witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus. 22. The last public discourse of Jesus, which was evangelistic, yet won none to belief, not even because of His signs. Many of the rulers were convicted, but not to the point of a confession of Christ. 23. The prayer of Jesus, not only for His dis-

ciples, " but for them also that believe on me through their word."

III. DISCLOSURES IN ANALYZING THE REFERENCES TO EVANGELISM IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

Of the forty-three evangelistic references, about twenty-five refer to personal work with individuals by Jesus; twelve refer to public work of Jesus without the individual being personally interviewed; about five refer to neither public nor personal Evangelism.

Of the twenty-five instances of private method most record conversions; of the twelve instances of public mass approach most record no conversions.

There is no reference to a series of public meetings such as we know, or anything like them in the four Gospels.

On more than one occasion Jesus actually shunned publicity.

Jesus discounted most of the belief of those who were won in a public way by motives for decision that only the spectacular aroused in them, especially His healings.

The deeper truths were not spoken to the crowd, and Jesus told His disciples that the reason was the inability of the crowd to understand.

The crowd would follow when something sensational was being done, but was absent when truth was expounded.

Jesus is the master personal worker. He used the personal method Himself to win men and depended

upon the individual contacts of His disciples to win converts. He realized that the principle of one person winning another would be the surest and most productive multiplying force and method.

The chief use of public Evangelism when used was to justify His message and work, to reinforce and prepare for His personal method, which won the definite decisions.

Most of Jesus' preaching was an educational presentation of His Gospel truths. Behind His Evangelism was authoritative teaching. There is not a single drawing of the net for decisions publicly. The Gospel preached was seed to grow if conditions would permit. The reaping was a single-hand task for every disciple. It would seem grotesque to think of Jesus going through the usual public maneuvres to pin men down by the various schemes of which popular evangelistic net-drawing consists. Surely no scheming and harangueing and embarrassing tricks would seem fitting for Jesus to indulge in.

However, Jesus was very emotional in His attitude and it does seem fitting to think of Him as presenting the reasons for decision strongly, and even with weeping as He was moved with compassion.

He had a fire which consumed the dross in men who lingered near Him.

He spoke with authority in His evangelistic discourse, as He did regarding all subjects. No "ifs," but "verily, verily." "All power is given unto me." He "spoke with authority and not as the scribes."

He had sympathy with sincere learners, knowing

their frame. He was saddened by the refusal of the rich young ruler.

He fully appreciated the potentialities for good, even of people who were the most wicked.

He had the eye of faith which love made possible.

He had large resourcefulness in dealing with people.

Indifference staggered Jesus, and caused the cross. "How often would I have gathered thee as a hen would her brood, and ye would not."

His evangelistic messages and appeals were atmosphered in prayer. "He went alone into the mountain and prayed all night." Again, "Arising a great while before day, he prayed."

His appreciation of children is in striking contrast to the attitude of good people of His day.

He was a strong character in winning people.

He had a faith in the everlasting guiding principles of His Father which admit no exceptions.

He held to the elemental realities of the eternal verities. He had a permanent stability at the root of things. His voice was like "the deep calling unto deep."

There labours Jesus, so different that He stands almost alone. It is difficult for His disciples to keep even far behind Him. But they advance. The seemingly quick methods to success, however shallow, are all they can sometimes see. The selfish easy method would suit them better. They are too confused with the intricacies of the adult mind to appreciate the elemental truths of childhood and life so clear to Jesus. It need not take the deliberations of a committee to

know the mind of this Jesus; obedience will know His mind at once.

Yes, this is Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, and God Himself. We can afford to obey Him, and practice His example in winning people to Him.

III

THE LAST COMMAND OF JESUS

The Great Commission embodies the practice and will of Jesus evangelistically. If a dozen persons had never seen it and were asked to write a paragraph of résumé and climax based on the evangelistic references to Jesus, they could make no more appropriate statement of the mind and will of Jesus than He made Himself, and probably it would not be as fine.

After the resurrection, "the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him they worshipped him; but some doubted." Who doubted Jesus? Some of the eleven disciples. What were they doing while doubting? Worshipping Jesus. Can you see it, worshipping doubters! We have seen it. Every pastor has seen that sight. If, then, some of the elect about Jesus could doubt Him while worshipping, then why should that experience surprise us to-day. If Jesus submitted to doubt of any kind then, He will now, and leaders in His name must expect no better reception than Jesus to suggestions of faith.

Jesus does not lose His patience with them, however, nor should we if we are Christlike leaders. He didn't

even mention their doubts, but answered that doubt with a strong affirmation of His supreme power, "All authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth." Evidence of power is always the best answer to doubt. In that statement they were reminded of the repeated experiences of His unusual power. In the memory of this and with a therefore He now makes His command, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

This Commission was given to all Christians, when thus uttered to the eleven representatives of the Church. The eleven could not outlive the end of the world. The task would have been too great for only eleven men to accomplish, both in the extent of territory to be covered, especially in that age, and in the amount of labour needed to disciple and teach all nations. Even the whole Church has not done it yet, although it would have been possible long centuries ago if they had obeyed. Wherever and whenever this task has been left to a few officials to perform, it has either failed to spread the Gospel or a priestly Gospel has been partly spread that has spoiled the mission and delayed the simple faith. There is no command to non-Christians, but to all Christians.

The command is for Christians to "go," not merely to "send" some one else. Sending some one else is

well, if one also goes himself, or finds it absolutely impossible to go personally. The following references indicate action. Jesus "went about." That is how He came upon so many people. They followed Him after He went where they were. How beautiful are the "feet" of Him who "bringeth good tidings." These words suggest travel and mission, not a stationary preaching platform. Behold a sower "went forth." A sower's feet walk many miles in a day. Jesus said, "Launch out." No wonder they were amazed at the catch. Pray that He "send forth" labourers. He never commanded to pray for a harvest, but for reapers for the ready harvest. He that "goeth forth" and reapeth, "bearing" precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, "bringing" his sheaves with him.

The purpose of the going is to make disciples, not to merely invite people to church. To win a decision, it is not enough to tell them what a nice preacher we have, what fine music, or how magnificently equipped an edifice. Win them and they will like the pastor and all else. There is no command in the Bible that I know of which commands a non-believer to go to church. The only command is for the Church to go to the unconverted to win them to conversion. Then they will want to go to church.

Then, when they come, baptize them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. They need this public confession, and for the Christian to see that it is done is a part of the command of Christ. This is the initial sign which He asks to

indicate that the convert is sincere in his desire to be linked up with Christ and the fellowship of His Church.

The Church is asked to go to all nations. That includes our own. The disciple who goes into his own local circle of influence will be more anxious to send others where he cannot himself go. Only local witnessing will create a real interest in foreign witnessing. Foreign missions will never rise above home missions. The reason for so much purely nominal missionary interest is the fact of only a nominal local Evangelism.

Many new "isms" exercise more sense in bringing their ideas to people in personal visitation than most Christians exercise in witnessing for Christ to others. While we have been beating the bushes, another has caught the birds. Not only many of our prospects but many of our members have been captured by all sorts of quasi-religious and philosophical fads right next door to where we live. This is done largely through their evangelistic personal visitation.

Our members have been powerless to stem the tide, because they have not been instructed in a personal Evangelism that functions. A simultaneous approach is called for, in all nations at once, "Both in Jerusalem and to the uttermost part of the earth." The world is the field and it will not come to the Church, until the Church has gone out into it and sown it full of the seed of the Gospel, and Christ has been personally presented and accepted. This Commission means world conquest for Christ, a universal, continuous

effort, never to end while one person in a village, city, or the world remains out of Christ.

There must be continual saving of the saved through "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Teach those things first, secular things that are helpful afterward. Some of the most difficult and indifferent prospects whom we meet in visitation about the country are graduates of denominational schools. They have the denominational diploma and degree, but not the denomination's Christ.

The Commission tells us what to teach, and surely in the light of all the effort in providing secular education which the state provides, at denominational expense, without first winning the student to Christ, is traitorous to Christ and His resources in us. It is certainly true of some denominations that they have enough members to educate in secular things without spending their resources educating non-Christians in secular matters. The command is to cultivate the convert. We fool ourselves and get into unnecessary difficulties when we do otherwise.

To those who "go" is the promise of the companionship of Jesus, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The absence of the presence of Jesus with many disciples is explained by their refusal to "go." They want Jesus to always sit down with them in their disobedient, unlovely laziness, and this He has not promised to do. The promise of His presence is only to those who "go." We cannot be consistent Christians without being in happy harmony

with this Commission. In obeying Jesus in trying to win others, we automatically come into close fellowship with Him and with all His power.

The obedience to the Great Commission explains the power, joy and results of those groups who have gone out in visitation Evangelism.

IV

THE EVANGELISM OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES

I. EVANGELISTIC REFERENCES IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS

THE evangelistic references in the book of The Acts will now be set down and later commented on.

"And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth," is recalled in the opening chapter of Acts. How well it fits in with the Great Commission!

In Chapter Two is recounted the pentecostal experience. It begins with the testimony of many of the Galilean Christians among the one hundred and twenty gathered together, for the devout Jews from every nation exclaimed, "Are not all these who speak Galileans?" These many voices make them marvel, for they hear in their own tongue. Peter has not yet spoken. But now to defend their testimony he stands up, with the eleven, and addresses the Jews of Judea, Jerusalem, and Israel. About three thousand persons, apparently all Jews, believe and are baptized.

Peter preached to an audience prepared by much talented, individual work. This is the great example of mass evangelistic preaching in the New Testament, yet it was immediately preceded by much individual

work. We may never know how much of the success of this pentecostal Evangelism was due to Peter and how much to the hundred and twenty, and to the eleven, but there was, considering the large results, honour enough for all.

We must recognize that both preaching and individual work in a crowd are correlated at Pentecost. This is an historic event which helps to launch the little church of believers. There is no command or suggestion that Pentecost be repeated. It is a unique situation for a unique purpose, which is uniquely accomplished. However, whatever there is which may be common to any evangelistic situation and purpose without "dragging it in" would be valuable to duplicate.

We are commanded, however, to obey Jesus in meeting the needs of our own evangelistic situation, which would result, and has resulted in some cities, with blessings proportionately as great or greater. The pentecostal spirit and surrender and activity will give us our own unique pentecost.

At the close of Chapter Two, the disciples are meeting day by day in the temple, breaking bread with gladness in their homes and having added to them daily those who were saved.

In the third chapter, Peter and John are preaching and educating the people, and many who hear believe. The number now grows to about five thousand.

In the fifth chapter, wonders are wrought among the people and multitudes of men and women believe. Also teaching and preaching are mentioned.

In the sixth chapter, the disciples are multiplying in number, a great company of the priests being obedient to the faith. Stephen appears, with wonders and signs, and speaking with wisdom and spirit which they cannot withstand. Nevertheless, they are not converted. They stone him to death.

In the eighth chapter, with the death of Stephen, a persecution sets in which drives the Christians, excepting the apostles, from Jerusalem. Saul does house-to-house visitation, for, laying waste the Church, he enters every house, dragging men and women out to prison. Philip goes down to Samaria and, preaching with signs, is followed by great crowds. Many persons are baptized, including Simon the sorcerer. But these believe and are baptized without receiving the Holy Spirit. This always seemed to have happened when signs and wonders—the sensational—were done before the multitude. So it had been with the crowds who believed on Jesus because of His miracles. Peter and John come down and remedy this defect, after which they preach in many villages of the Samaritans. Philip seeks out the Ethiopian treasurer, wins and baptizes him.

In the ninth chapter, Saul is converted in the house of Judas on Straight Street. Ananias is persuaded to assist Paul in seeing, and receiving the Holy Spirit, whereupon he is baptized and then eats to strengthen himself. Then he preaches in the synagogues of Damascus, no conversions being recorded, but which results in his being driven from town. He leaves by night, lowered from the walls in a basket.

Paul now preaches boldly in Jerusalem, no result being mentioned, other than the necessity of leaving because of the threat on his life. The saints "sent him forth to Tarsus. So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; . . . and was multiplied." It would seem from this that Paul was being called to be a missionary evangelist abroad rather than a "stirrer-up" of the settled churches at home. Peter performs wonders in Lydda and Joppa and many believe.

In the tenth chapter occurs a new evangelistic departure. Peter catches up with the Great Commission, in that he learns that it is his duty to preach to the Gentiles. This he does at the home of Cornelius. His Jewish fellow-Christians are amazed that these Gentiles believe, but there being no objection when Peter inquires, they are baptized. For this departure Peter is reprimanded by the apostles at Jerusalem, but he wins them over to belief in preaching to Gentiles, so that the remainder of the apostles catch up with the Great Commission and are willing to obey it.

In the eleventh chapter, disciples win Gentile Greeks at Antioch. Barnabas is sent here and many more converts are added. He seeks Paul, and both teach the Church at Antioch. Here the disciples are first called Christians.

In the twelfth chapter, it is stated that Herod was eaten with worms, and died; "but the word of God grew and multiplied."

In the thirteenth chapter, the proconsul is converted through a wonder performed by Paul, who with Bar-

nabas has been set apart for evangelistic and confirmatory work, men who "hazarded their lives for the name of Christ."

In the fourteenth chapter, Paul and Barnabas speak in the synagogue on two Sabbaths, angering the Jews but winning many Gentiles who came to hear.

In the fifteenth chapter, the news of the conversion of the Gentiles caused great joy among the Jewish brethren.

In the sixteenth chapter, Paul confirms the Church in the faith and "they increase in number daily." Paul takes along Timothy, who is the son of a Christian mother. This suggests that children of the first Christians are now becoming active workers. The gaoler and his family are baptized.

In the seventeenth chapter, Paul and Silas win converts of all kinds, by reasoning in the synagogue three Sabbaths. At Berea the same thing happened. In Athens Paul reasons with the Jews in the synagogue, and with others in the market-place, and with the philosophers at the Areopagus. Here "certain men clave unto him, and believed; among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Daramis, and others."

In the eighteenth chapter, Paul reasons in the synagogue every Sabbath, and seeks to persuade Jews and Greeks. But when the Jews oppose him and blaspheme, with demonstration, he declares, "from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believes, and all his house; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, are baptized.

The field is so fertile here that he stays a year and six months, teaching them. At Ephesus he reasons in the synagogue, but refuses to stay longer when urged to, though he promises to return, if possible. After returning for a brief visit to Jerusalem, he establishes the disciples in the region of Galatia and Phrygia.

In the nineteenth chapter, Paul discovers the zealous, useful, but not thorough work of Apollos, and therefore had about twelve men baptized again. For three months he reasons in the synagogue, but quits when their group becomes hostile. Separating from the disciples, for two years he reasons daily in the school of Tyrannus.

In the twentieth chapter, Paul reminds the elders of the church at Ephesus, in what manner he had laboured there from the first day, for three years, with lowliness of mind, tears, and trials, teaching them publicly and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the twenty-first chapter, Paul reports at Jerusalem, and is cautioned because of the rumours of his heresy concerning his reported instruction of the Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Jewish customs. The elders suggest, therefore, that Paul be purified in the temple to silence the critics, which he did.

In the twenty-eighth chapter, Paul is reasoning with the Jews in his own hired lodging in Rome. Some of them believe. In his home for years, to all who come in unto him, he preaches and teaches concerning the

Lord Jesus Christ, and with all boldness. After temporary freedom and travel he is again imprisoned, and with no hope of acquittal because of the bitter persecution of the time, he calmly awaits the end. "Suffer hardships, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry. I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come."

II. DISCLOSURES IN ANALYZING THE REFERENCES IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS

Most of the references concern Paul. Paul's work is of a missionary and travelling nature, meeting groups at various cities. Paul's public work is of an educational nature, usually referred to as "reasoning."

The comparatively fewer references in Paul's life than in the life of Jesus to individual Evangelism, may be accounted for in two ways. The nature of Paul's work may have hindered such practice, and he may have had much more to learn about the importance of the prime method of Jesus.

The manner, method, mood, and content of the message of Paul is quite different in various ways from that of Jesus. However, there are as many references to the personal method as to the mass method. Innumerable personal incidents are no doubt unmentioned for lack of space. This was no doubt true of the record of Jesus, also.

Paul's work as a confirmer of the saints would necessitate much group work of a revival and educational nature.

The book of Acts teaches by example personal win-

ning of men whenever possible. The accessions to the disciples would have been impossible without emphasis and large practice of work with individuals.

Of about thirty references, we may roughly say that one-fourth is to individual work, one-fourth to public appeal, and one-fourth to a mixture of both, and one-fourth is not indicated.

Any series of public meetings, such as we know, are not mentioned. Where a church is formed, there is continual education, worship, and winning of converts through individual contacts.

Practically all the public evangelistic messages were for educational and inspirational purposes. Inquirers tarried without being urged and corralled, but because of interest and conviction.

In the light of these references, it would be difficult to even conceive of Paul, of Peter, or of any of the disciples drawing the net as has been done in our usual mass meeting. Results came through the earnestness and reasoning power of the speakers which brought a conviction which needed no "net drawing." The public effort was a simple, powerful, and beautiful demonstration of the Holy Spirit, not a bizarre affair of worked-up interest.

There is no mention of children. We miss the beautiful attention to them which Jesus exemplified.

After they had tarried at Jerusalem, they had a rich blessing, but tarrying too long thereafter in disobeying to evangelize the world, they were driven to their task through persecution.

The failure to appeal at first to all races and many

other differences, judging from the references in the Gospel, indicate it was as difficult to follow Jesus closely in Evangelism as in other respects. This suggests why disciples to-day, as always, are slow in carrying out the simple Evangelism of the four Gospels. We have always had much to learn from Jesus.

We do not make any reference in our study of the first disciples in the Epistles and early church history, since the book of The Acts is typical and much space would be required. Suffice it to say that it is the consensus of opinion that the Church of the first centuries grew phenomenally fast because of individual evangelistic work.

We rejoice in the Evangelism of the early disciples, in their heroism amidst perils impossible to-day, and in the marvellous growth of the early Church.

With a fresh memory of how Jesus worked evangelistically, and profiting by the lessons to be drawn from the work of the first Christians, we proceed to study our own evangelistic situation and needs.

V

THE LOSSES THROUGH LACK OF EVANGELISM

WHENEVER the evangelistic program of Jesus has been abridged or has become *inoperative,* the purpose and existence of His Church have been weakened, and losses have been experienced. These losses have often been irreparable, and have come naturally in response to the law: Evangelize or die!

The Church has lost what it has failed to use. Some churches have lost interest in the cause of Christ. Being " neither hot nor cold," the snap of coldness and the action of heat are lost.

Some have lost light. " Awake, thou that sleepeth, and shine! " has vainly been said to others, but they have preferred to lose wakefulness, and the darkness of prolonged sleep has remained.

Some have lost their life. " Thou art dead! " is their brief obituary. Loss of even existence has occurred, and only the memory of that loss lingers. Of the seven churches addressed in the book of Revelation, the five rebuked have passed away, but the two remain. Some churches even now seem dead and without hope of resurrection.

Some have lost material resources. Their needs are only met by roundabout methods. The members and

the community will not respond freely, and scheming devices are relied upon to get from them what they might have given freely and directly. Some have lost faith in such a response, perhaps realizing folks are getting nothing for which to give. Such churches are looked upon as hopeless propositions, leading a hand-to-mouth existence, in embarrassed circumstances, with pastors harried by uncertainties.

Some churches have lost the prospects who have never been asked to join their membership. In one of our prominent churches—prominent because of wealth and ability in the past to engage attractive pulpit rhetoric—at the close of one of our meetings for edification, a fine specimen of a man was asked by the pastor, as they walked through the vestibule toward the door, "Of what church are you a member?"

"Of none," he answered.

"Of course you have confessed Christ and consider yourself a Christian?"

"I never have," he replied.

"Why not?"

"No one has ever asked me to, although I have been coming to this church on and off for over forty years."

"Well, I ask you now!" exclaimed the pastor.

And the man responded, "And I accept, and desire you to baptize me."

It would have been difficult for me to have believed the man, except for the fact that I have seen such instances of neglect in almost every church where I

have laboured. In a certain pastorate, the spirit of Evangelism was growing, and people were confessing Christ, but when I inquired of a woman going on seventy years of age concerning her relationship to Jesus and the Church, it came out that she had been attending this church regularly since babyhood, and no one had ever invited her decision. She gladly made it when asked, and I baptized her. Her life had seemed that of a highly respected Christian woman, and so she continued, her open confession and membership giving the cause new joy and value.

The first instance was one of a person overlooked by a wealthy and self-sufficient church; the second was a case of a dignified small group, with financial weakness, being satisfied with the woman's financial help and probably afraid of offending her by the challenge to a definite decision.

In one of my pastorates such a woman of eighty-four years of age had been a constant attendant all her life at churches in England and in this country, of various denominations. Our invitation, she said, was the first, and she gladly accepted it. Such experiences are too numerous to mention, but many linger in my mind. The type of, and reason for such omissions are numerous, and all evangelists have met them.

Among the innumerable host unnoticed, unwon, and mostly unknown, have been some who have come to be famous. These were persons of possible great usefulness in the cause. It is said that Leon Trotzky was in frequent contact with many Christians in New York in his younger days, but no one ever tried to win him

to Christ. A certain farmer walked to church every Sunday past the home of a boy whom he never even asked to attend Sunday School. That boy became the founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith.

Churches have lost a net gain. They have not grown. They have felt fortunate in merely replacing themselves. The chief evangelistic task of many churches has been replacement. While this has been a notable achievement with a certain number of churches not in growing situations, most of the other churches have not seemed to realize that the Church needs a complete replacement every thirty years before it can grow. If more churches would realize that fact and that a million or more new members are needed every year, merely to replace the losses of the year, before any addition in the membership of the Church in the United States is possible, they might strive more to grow. It is not enough to live only on accessions by letter from evangelistic churches.

Churches lose members unnecessarily. Lapsed membership is a source of tremendous leakage. Often a new régime of leadership in a church, with no personal effort expended to interest inactive members, will impatiently drop their names from the fellowship list. Often there is a neglect by a new pastor of the recent converts under his predecessor. Instead of honouring *him,* and encouraging them, he is unloving and unwise enough not only to ignore both, but actually to say belittling things about them. This forces leakage. The love and effort that win converts is needed to hold them. What a joy there may be in honouring

a preceding pastor and giving special attention to those won under his pastorate.

Churches not only lose recruits but the opportunity to win them. Many a church this very hour has scanty prospects because of a past inertia. Folks have died and gone and not been won, and their children do not rise up and call the church blessed, and the neglect of those they loved has certainly been no reason why they should revere the church. Evangelists called to help what are called "run down" churches realize how like a run down farm a church may become, much work needing to be done before large harvests are possible. Most of the blame for small results or credit for large results are due the church, not the evangelist. Yes, churches may even lose their day of opportunity.

A church closed recently and sold its property to another church almost identical denominationally. The church that lost its opportunity and had to close, had a better opportunity in every sense than the newcomer, which steadily gained opportunity by serving what it had. These evolution and devolution processes occurred simultaneously during twenty years in this neighbourhood.

The Church has lost continents for ages. When it ceased to be loyal to the New Testament standard, stagnation took place, and now after centuries of inaction, we are comparatively weakly trying to redeem the situation, countless millions having passed out of this life without attention. In the United States, according to the *World Almanac,* while the Church has

gained about four million new members in the ten years between 1916 and 1926, the population has increased about nineteen million. The increase in population was four times greater than the increase in church membership.

Success during one year will not be enough to offset that drift. A flood-tide during many years is needed. The earth's population is about one billion seven hundred and forty-eight million. Of this number, one billion and thirty-six million are non-Christians, one hundred and forty-eight million are unclassified, and five hundred and sixty-six million are of Christian population. Not only have we the task of winning the United States and keeping it won, but we have the other two-thirds of the human race to win, and in thirty years they will be gone, and replaced again. This is the situation which confronts the Church of Christ. Comments on this would be superfluous, it is too staggering a fact.

Lastly, we lost what is most important of all, the life of Christ in countless millions of human beings in this world. That is bad enough. God forbid that it be worse.

Any movement away from Evangelism does not produce results, but rather leads the more to confirm terrific losses.

VI

SOME CAUSES OF EVANGELISTIC INACTIVITY

The masterly inactivity of many churches evangelistically is due to a lack of an evangelistic plan. They are infected with the disease of indirection, have a wobbling course and lose their evangelistic grip. Not functioning with satisfactory efficiency, the church is at a low ebb.

This lack of plan often results in a spurt of Evangelism to keep the church afloat, instead of a real spirit of Evangelism. Accidental Evangelism is depended upon. If some of the teachers happen to lead their pupils to Christ, very well; if not, very well. One pastor is not evangelistic, but the next one may be; so it is hoped that accessions will be had sometime, somehow.

It is a hit-or-miss proposition. No successful business could grow with such a lack of policy, but this is only a religious interest, not a business one, is the subconscious thought of the leaders. However, students of the subject know that a church with yearly definite plans of Evangelism wins many times more converts than the church without plans, which practices spasmodic and accidental Evangelism.

Most churches emphasize the "go-to-church"

method, thinking to interest prospects after they come to the services. Inviting prospects to church may have a place, but it should not be a substitute for winning prospects to Christ and the Church in their homes. We are reminded here that in our New Testament study Christians are not asked to invite folks to church but are commanded to go to them to seek to win them. Moreover, the command to the unconverted was not to attend church, but to be converted. Winning and conversion should come first in normal evangelistic method, then those won will want to come to church. We must not depend on the catch-or-miss uncertainty of the "go-to-church" method, but on the Scriptural method of directly endeavouring to win people.

Most evangelistic campaigns have exhausted all means at any cost to get the nonChristian to attend the service. Often unChristian and undignified methods have been justified by the hope of getting some to come to church. But this works less and less, and the nonChristians do not attend as they once did.

A Socialist said, at a meeting of his followers, "The present policy of the Church is this: You may come here and get God's message and go to heaven, or you may stay away and go to hell!"

Inconsistent living of Christian leaders is another deterrent to evangelistic work. This is so common we hardly need to emphasize it further at this place. Such leaders should not object to a revival for their church, if not an evangelistic effort to win others.

Bitter feelings may deter, and leaders entertaining them know that others will realize their inconsistency if favouring a movement to save others. "Put away all wrath and bitter feeling." Controversy kills Evangelism and Evangelism kills controversy. Let strife and bitterness cease.

Many leaders fear to do individual work in Evangelism. The basis of that fear will be seen later. It is a fear which cuts the evangelistic nerve. In a certain visitation effort, one of the most capable women in the church excused herself from agreeing to be a friendly visitor for any of the five nights of the week of visitation, because of a secretarial task she had at a state conference of the denomination, which was being held two days of the week. On Wednesday night she appeared for work, to our surprise, and confessed the following: "When one of the speakers spoke on personal work, he looked right at me and shouted, 'You are a coward, that is why you are unwilling to speak to others.' That got me, and after that session I hurried back to get in on the last three nights." While this was stronger language than I would think politic in an actual effort, yet I was glad a conference speaker used it, and the woman was glad.

The spirit of indifference to the condition of the unconverted is the great sin of the Church. It is often a lazy indifference. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Apparently many Christians do not think so. There is sometimes even yearning for a lost humanity, without definite interest in those out of

Christ near by. Dr. Frederick E. Taylor's opening chapter in his book on Evangelism is on "The Lost Word." This word is concern. Concern on the part of Christians for others, and the consequence of that, concern on the part of nonChristians for their own salvation, both of which seem less in evidence these days.

A lessening sense of sin may partly account for the indifference. If people do not need to be saved from sin, why save them. Much easy-going thinking needs to be met with the facts of sin and the facts of the salvation of Christ.

A smug complacence that is even worse than thin indifference is another cause. It is unstirred by the noble ambition to win others. It is as motionless as the tombstone, with magnificent reserve at elegant ease in its soft and easy position, while the enemy scoffs at their apathy, and comes in like a flood. This religious snobbery must be washed away with a real revival of a new acquaintance with Christ.

Unspiritual church pillars do not favour Evangelism because it is of necessity a spiritual work. An orthodox creed is fine for them, but secular means to carry on the work of the Church are very agreeable and sufficient. "Thou art dead!" Why? Life has left the spiritual being.

They have left their first love. The hearth-fire of their love has burned out. To refer them to the command of Christ to "go" is not enough since the motive power of the love of Christ which constrains is not in them.

They pray for conversion no longer, naturally. Loveless lives mean prayerless lives. Christians will never pray more for converts until they learn to love them more, unless it be merely artificial praying.

The pastor's lack of initiative may keep folks from becoming converts. A pastor surrendered to the will of Christ must usually precede the surrender of the church. Laymen are sometimes more interested in church advance and in securing evangelistic victories than their pastors. After seventy-four persons were won for membership in a church of two hundred resident members, most of whom were also making their first confession of Jesus, I was told that one of the young business men of the church was responsible for having me come, since he had been urging the pastor and the officers for a year to do something definite in winning people.

Pastoral weaknesses are sometimes stumbling-blocks to Evangelism. Members realize the weakening influences of such poor examples of Christian living, especially among the young. Of what value is all this talk from the pulpit of purity of living, heroic character, etc., if the preacher is a poor example of heroic self-denial in everyday habits of living. "Physician, heal thyself!" members still say. Of course, members ought to overlook the failings of their pastor, but we know what human nature is, and how inevitable is the damage and lack of co-operation which results from unrespected leadership.

Such leadership may be cutting the vital nerve centre of the layman's constitution, setting him to sin in various ways. A man said to me, "I believe in Christ, but I cannot believe in that pastor, therefore I think it would be wrong to have him baptize me into the church, and it is too much to expect me to co-operate with him as a pastor." My answer was that the invitation to do all this was the best kind of a test of the sincerity and grace of his discipleship, that he was believing in Christ, not the pastor, and that the grace necessary to go through with such a pastor would be the best proof of real conversion from human nature. The man met the challenge, and of course was willing that his son, whom he had held off, should be baptized by the pastor, and then won his wife to do the same.

Unevangelistic pastoring means leakages also. Some pastors fail to see that the relation of a pastor to a church is very similar in principle to that of a farmer to his farm. He must clear it, plough it deeply, harrow it and reharrow it, sow it, cultivate it, keep on cultivating it. Then he can reap.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me, and know my thoughts." Dr. Taylor says in his fine book, *The Evangelistic Church,* that at Northfield, Moody stood up and announced the above as his text; then "Step by step he led us to see the need of a pure life, and as he spoke the Spirit of God searched the hearts of the men present. When Mr. Moody closed his sermon, every man there felt as though he had seen the Lord, and, like one of old,

wanted to cry out: 'Woe is me! for I am undone.' I got a vision of myself that night that made me want to be alone with God, for I felt if any man in that audience needed cleansing, I was that man. When I arrived at our tent, I found that my chum had preceded me, and was on his knees pouring out his soul to God, asking pardon and cleansing. Together we bowed and sought the Lord and confessed our sins and together we rose up to be different men, because of that sermon."

Too often our strength is gone, and we know it. We need cleansing and a sense of God's pardoning grace. With David we would then cry out, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." There is no doubt a man of wholesome and well rounded out personality exercises an especially powerful influence in winning people.

Cantankerous church officers, or one officer in a group, may be the cause of failure. Many an earnest, consecrated pastor has been heart-broken over the failure of his official group to follow his leadership in reaching sufficiently the prospects of the church.

One group of officers decided to let the pastor have me come, thinking it would show his pastorate as incapable of producing new members. When the minister got down to business in preparing for my coming, the officers decided that large results might come and this would strengthen the pastor and perpetuate his pastorate. So, just before I arrived, they voted to cancel the engagement. The notice of cancellation was too late to allow using the date,

although other situations would have had hundreds of converts had it been available soon enough for preparation.

Such pastors are "prisoners of hope" and live in despair. Dr. Mark Matthews, pastor of one of the few largest churches in the world, built up through personal work, says, "Many of the elders of the Presbyterian Church are too lazy to win men to Christ." I would call it, in many cases, pure "cussedness." Some officers lead on to victory, others are always hindering any advance. As often as not the rank and file of the church is more willing to advance than the officers. Many a pastor has lost all initiative because squelched so often by cautious or lazy church officers, that he loses faith and instead of being a pastoral leader becomes merely to a large degree a time-server. If more pastors in the early years of their ministry would either lead, or resign, the officials in general would finally be more responsive.

In my first year of specialized evangelistic work I received a letter from the young pastor of a small village church, saying that the officers had stayed away from the business meeting since they disapproved of having an effort, but several members agreed to entertain me if I came for a week, and one young man said he would give ten dollars toward advertising. He said he wanted to be frank about the invitation, that it was not coming from the officers who disliked his lack of education, but from a few of the members, and that the offering would be very small.

This was too rare an opportunity for both a revival and an evangelistic ingathering to miss. I went. Here was a church paying $1,000 and parsonage to a preacher with a wife and four children. The officers all received more than this for their labours, yet they criticized this preacher, a Bible School graduate, for his lack of elementary education and experience. As I grew to know the young pastor, of his conversion from an ungodly situation, of his sweet disposition and good grace and commendable zeal, I sought to help him in every way possible.

These men were finicky about some niceties, yet themselves were transgressing a greater law in nagging him, and previous pastors who were far bigger souls than they. As this dawned on them, in one week we had a revival. The second week every officer was a friendly visitor, and they led the work in winning a forty per cent increase to the little church, about thirty-five persons being won. At the close the pastor and officers were loving each other and God had blessed the co-operation.

Previous unhappy evangelistic experiences are another hindrance. "The burnt child dreads the fire." Good men and women and well intentioned officers associate all evangelistic effort with narrow teaching, impossible ideas, and crude methods. They fear another clumsy, perhaps unChristian effort with mean decoys and professional tricks. They do not see how the chaff can be winnowed from the wheat in evangelistic work.

The biggest reason for lack of Evangelism has been

the failure to instruct lay members in the art of winning others. Pastors do not teach the members how to do it, and some do not set a very diligent example in doing it themselves. Practically all churches have failed to provide training through their pastor or otherwise. There has been too much harangue about the responsibility of laymen to function, without training and guidance in doing it. It has been more the fault of leadership than of the people. How enthusiastically many a pastor and conference speaker has become in his evangelistic challenge, and saints became red-hot in high resolve, but being turned loose without generalship, all became once again disappointed. The tragedy was that the real reason, lack of training and guidance, was hidden, and that loyal saints blamed themselves unnecessarily.

This lack of training in the Church has been but a consequence of the lack of training of pastors in the theological seminaries. Most seminaries have not trained future pastors in the art of personal work and how to train members therein. What little smattering of reference to it has been given by some schools has been overbalanced by cautions against Evangelism. At this writing there are chairs in everything but Evangelism in practically all the old-line seminaries. Students have often been more interested in Evangelism than have the faculty. One famous theological president used proudly to say in chapel that he never preached an evangelistic sermon nor hoped to preach one. More than one professor will remember a struggle on the part of the students to

have even temporary instruction in Evangelism, and the presence of an evangelistic speaker once a year.

There are indications that the schools that train pastors are beginning to adequately develop them evangelistically, and we may hope will one day train the students to train the laymen. This is such a Scripturally and humanly obvious need that it is a marvel it has gone so long neglected. And only he should teach this Evangelism who has been and is an outstanding example of winning men himself and also of training laymen who actually win others. The blind cannot lead the blind. The inexperienced cannot teach the inexperienced in an experiential subject.

VII

THE NEED OF ADEQUATE EVANGELISM

The proclamation of the Gospel, of the good news, in such a way as to attract and win to allegiance to Christ the greatest possible number of people, is adequate Evangelism. There are many novel ways of putting the meaning of Evangelism. Dr. E. Y. Mullins says, "What is Evangelism? The proclamation that, . . . at the trysting-place . . . God and man meet in Christ and settle the controversy. It is the approach of the divine to the human."

Evangelism is God's method for setting the soul free from sin. Through Evangelism, God regenerates men and they in turn are in a way regenerators in their agency of promoting a knowledge and interest which the Spirit can bless in regenerating others. The Redeemer is presented that through Him men might be redeemed from sin. All agencies that aid in evangelizing are to that extent evangelistic. Evangelism and missions should be synonymous. The very nature of the new creature in Christ Jesus is missionary. Some denominations call their evangelistic effort a mission, and him who conducts it a missioner. The words, evangelist and gospel, come from the same original word. An evangelist is the messenger of the good tidings.

Phillips Brooks once said, "Sad will be the day for any man when he becomes absolutely contented with the life he is living, with the thought he is thinking, and deeds he is doing; when there is not forever beating at the door of his soul some great desire to do something larger which he knows that he was meant and made to do, because he is a child of God." It is in the spirit of desire to be better evangelists that we seek to know the most adequate means to that end. Private conversation, our religious press, prayer meeting inquiries, and convention references, all reveal a deep dissatisfaction with the present evangelistic condition of the Church.

In 1927, Dr. Goodell, of the Federal Council of Churches, quotes Sir William Robertson Nicoll, "the Church does not grow, but rather decreases, and the confession of Christ is rarer and rarer among men." Dr. Goodell further suggests, "Would Jesus say of some churches, 'The ninety-nine sheep are lost in the wilderness?'" While "Evangelism is the transmission gear of the Church," and there is enough power in any church, yet, "the transmission gears are too often out of commission." This is a supremely critical generation for the Church. The Church to-day is probably superior to the early Church in various ways, in wealth, equipment, and learning, but not in evangelistic fervour, intelligence, and comparative results. When we hear of fifty-five thousand members in the Norway Baptist group, and that they have five churches on the Arctic Circle and sixty-seven missionaries at the Equator, we have one of the

thrills that come from such evidences of above-average activity.

There is much sympathetic interest in Evangelism. It is good news to many saints, who enjoy seeing others do it, and reading about it, but who would not be likely to call this book popular reading. They will even pay to have others do it for them. One pastor had a large check from a member who failed to appear for instruction in friendly visitation. The pastor had the honesty to dictate a note of thanks in which he reminded the man that his personal presence in the work would be of far more value than his money toward the expenses.

There is much conscience money in Evangelism. It is an established fact that the less the members are personally asked to work in winning others in an evangelistic effort, the greater is the thank-offering to the evangelist, regardless of the results. A proxy Evangelism long ago came into existence as a palliative for the church conscience. Green says, "It is a kind of half-hearted Evangelism which says, 'Now we believe in Evangelism, and it must be done, but we will just get some one else to do it for us.'" One writer is quite overencouraged by the evangelistic consecration at special conferences of Christian young people. To find serious consecration of a hundred young people at a summer conference made up of the young people who are the most devout workers from fifty churches is only natural, and does not indicate any hopefulness concerning the five thousand young folks back home who never get to a conference.

Such renewals and consecrations are splendid, but we should not allow them to camouflage the unmet need of the great mass of young people in the ranks of the Church, most of whom are living selfish lives and are not among the few struggling young people trying to keep the young people's organization going. Such getting down to the business of really getting to the minds and hearts of young people, as so many conferences do in isolated places, should be regularly attempted in every local church, for now, those who need such impacts most never get them.

The average pastor, whom I help, does not count on the co-operation of very many young people under twenty-five years of age in actual winning of other young people in an evangelistic effort. The older people constitute ninety per cent of the workers. Yet young people who have the grit to try are exceptionally successful. I do not recall one young man who was induced to go out an evening with me in personal visitation who was not glad to go out every other night with any partner.

We are forced to find a more adequate Evangelism, when we realize that America is the greatest foreign mission field. Converts won here could go back and talk the language of any race on earth. What a tremendous evangelistic multiplication there would be if the home churches were really thrown open for the foreigner within our cities.

In Ansonia, Connecticut, is the First Baptist Church. When I was with them in an effort, a beautiful young coloured girl sang in the choir. Also, she

went out in visitation Evangelism, and was one of the best winners of white prospects amongst all the workers. While this rather startled me, it did not surprise the workers.

In this building every week can be seen a splendid audience of Italians, another splendid audience of Polish people. It was quite a contrast to our own American congregation when I noticed how they sat up and leaned forward and eagerly drank in what was being uttered by their native preacher. The preachers were in vivid contrast also to most of the American preachers.

The growth of the Church in the United States and its relationship to the growth of the population constitutes vital information. In the midst of conflicting statements, such as, " the Church is declining in membership," and " having a marvellous growth," we may be set more nearly right by studying the following unbiased statistics.

The following figures are from the 1927 *World Almanac:*

CHURCH MEMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1916 AND 1925
(IN MILLIONS AND THOUSANDS, HUNDREDS LEFT OFF)

	All Denominations.	Roman Catholic.	Methodist.	Baptist.	Presbyterian.	Congregational.	Protestant Episcopal.	Unitarian.	Lutheran.	Reformed.
1916	41,926	15,721	7,166	8,153	2,255	791	1,092	82	2,467	537
1925	46,883	16,156	8,920	8,397	2,561	907	1,164	58	2,546	540
Gain	4,883	435	1,754	244	306	116	72	–24	79	3
Yearly Gain ...	495	43	175	24	30	11	7	–2	7	
Yearly Per Cent.	.015	.0027	.024	.0029	.013	.013	.006		.0028	

Population of the United States in 1916	98,000,000
Population of the United States in 1925	115,000,000
Gain	17,000,000
Yearly Per Cent	.017
Ten year increase of Population above increase of Church	12,000,000
Yearly increase of Population unwon by Church	1,200,000

The reader can make his own deductions concerning the above figures. The Church in the United States, while growing, is falling behind the population in growth. This suggests that the voice of the Church has been growing fainter in the past ten years, and will in the coming years unless Evangelism has a sudden and steady increase.

We must not forget that there are over one billion nonChristians in the world to-day.

While we in the United States are gaining one million new members for replacement of our Church membership, the population is gaining almost two million. Roughly, sixty per cent of the churches are merely replacing themselves, twenty per cent are losing members, and twenty per cent are gaining members. A look at any denominational state year book will visualize this and the total results bear it out. If it were not for the fact that one-fifth of the churches are really functioning evangelistically during any one year, the cause would be hopelessly lost.

The Evangelism of the past has not been adequate enough to prevent the above situation. There is manifest need of a more adequate Evangelism, and a way to operate it. We are impinged by the pressure of absolute necessity to find and use an adequate Evangelism.

There is an adequate Evangelism. It is the Evangelism of Scripture. In proportion as Evangelism has been unscriptural, it has lost out in the last analysis. Wherever it has been Scriptural, it has permanently gained. But the amount of the latter gain has not been enough to offset the failure of the former loss. True Evangelism is in harmony with the teaching, method, and appeal of the New Testament. Evangelism must be sane, healthily Scriptural and scripturally scientific.

Modern psychology justifies the methods of Evangelism when in harmony with apostolic standards. The only Evangelism that has failed has been spurious Evangelism, a substitute for the real thing. It has been a stumbling-block, keeping many churches from any kind of aggressive Evangelism. In many minds the term Evangelism has suggested certain abnormal forms rather than the substance of Evangelism. Much has been done in the name of God and Evangelism not warranted by either. Many of the present tremendous number of inactive members were not won in a Scriptural way.

Real results will come and keep coming when we follow a Scriptural program of Evangelism. The real religion of Jesus will always be needed by all people, and most of them will accept it when adequately presented. The only thing that has not failed is Christianity. All substitutes have been inadequate.

In the little parsonage of his first parish and later at the front of his great city church, Andrew Bonar had carved, "He who winneth souls is wise." It is

suggested that facing every pulpit there should be carved, " Sir, we would see Jesus." The prophecy of Jesus still rings down the years, " And I, if I be lifted up out of the earth, will draw all men unto myself." The soul of the nation and of all nations will be saved in proportion as they are evangelized.

We proceed now to find out how to put Scriptural Evangelism into operation.

VIII

VISITATION EVANGELISM

Visitation Evangelism is the approach by Christians in individual visitation, at their homes, of prospects for Christ and the Church, with the purpose of securing their decisions to accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour, to sincerely endeavour to obey Him, and to become a member of the Church in one of its local groups. Anything else than this is something else, and should not be confused with visitation Evangelism. It is a definite task with a definite purpose which puts Christ first and the Church second, and an honest relationship to the former as the basis for membership in the latter.

Visiting homes merely to invite people to attend church is not visitation Evangelism. Much has been called such that has been far from it. But real visitation puts the transmission gears of Evangelism in commission.

Visitation Evangelism can occur in any church at any time with rich results. We have seen it successful in small churches and in large churches. In quite a few states I have conducted efforts in both the smallest church and the largest church in the state, and the results have been phenomenal in each instance. It succeeds equally well in countryside

churches and in central city churches. It has been successful where pastors were strong and where they were weak, where churches were strong and where churches were weak, in July as well as in November, immediately after Easter as well as before Easter.

The pioneers as well as the recent exponents of it, since in its present scope and use it is but a few years old, are, to my knowledge, Strickland, and Conant, Black and Kernahan. Each of these men may have had a different slant on the subject, but all have been in agreement as to the main purpose and method. Each has done a notable piece of work in promoting the idea in an experiential way, doing it himself and leading others in actually doing it. Like pioneers in every field of endeavour, these men have had faith when others were sceptical. It has taken some years to meet the approval of our Church leaders, and still needs much intelligent leadership, and confirmation.

The demonstration of the effort under capable guidance has elicited wonderful expressions of approval from leaders who are interested in the best welfare of the churches. Dr. Goodell, Secretary of Evangelism for the National Federation of Churches, says, " Every pastor ought to utilize it " (speaking of the visitation method). If he does not know how to train workers, let him ask help from some director who is familiar with this work, and learn the most approved methods. Nothing would more noticeably quicken the life of a church than to have a consid-

erable portion of its membership give themselves to evangelistic visitation."

The author publishes a small booklet of appreciations from scores of outstanding pastors for whom he has conducted efforts. It may be had from him at Andover, and costs only ten cents a copy. It is the most convincing kind of material and will tremendously assist any pastor in encouraging his church to have an effort. It is an answer from pastors to many practical questions that are asked.

Visitation Evangelism is so solid in principle and true to the ideal and practices of the New Testament Church that it is no surprise that it has returned to bless the Church. This return has come at a crucial period in the history of the Church. It is a providential visitation upon the Church itself. The finger of God points to it as the way that wins.

Yet, like anything else, especially great things, it may be fairly criticized for its own good. But let the criticism be fair. Visitation Evangelism has certain unique and marvellous results, yet no one should expect it to be a cure-all for all the faults and weaknesses of pastors and churches. Some criticisms have been very foolish.

The most common criticism, usually made by those who have not wholeheartedly or in any way tried the method, is that some are not converted who enter the church that way. But the fact of it is that visitation Evangelism, in itself, has nothing to do with requirements for church membership, which is a church matter, and each church reflects its own

requirements through its candidate committee. Unconverted persons may enter the church regardless of the means of their decision. It should be remembered that the present tremendous number of non-co-operating church members were not won through campaigns of visitation Evangelism.

A leader in mass Evangelism or a leader in visitation Evangelism cannot be held responsible for the standards of candidate requirements for every denomination that participates in his campaign. The committee on membership in each local church are the responsible persons in this matter. Of course, it should be the ideal that every accession to a church be a convert to Christ first.

No more or less can be blamed or credited to the lay Evangelism of Scripture which Jesus taught and conducted. Who would blame Andrew in six weeks or three years when Peter publicly denied Christ, for bringing Peter to Christ. There were other forces and factors, beyond the power of Andrew, operating to delay the final intelligent surrender of Peter to Christ. Who would ask, " Who was the careless disciple who brought Judas into the fellowship of the Church? " Those who lack an appreciation of all that is behind lay Evangelism, may indicate their superficial knowledge of the subject, and small faith in God and man. Unfair criticism is poor justification of a pastor or layman for not obeying Jesus in doing visitation Evangelism.

Because the personal method as often indiscriminately used in years gone by may have been abused

is no reason this choicest method should be feared, but is all the more reason good workmen should use it and train others to rightly use it. Already many workers, in organized lay Evangelism, have entirely removed the mean connotations of the phrase, "personal work," in their church.

The evangelistic gift is the birthright of every Christian. Only indifference, ignorance, or laziness hinders the use of that gift. The smallness of the gift is not a reason for not using it. Its full use would enlarge it. Its smallness now may be due to past failure to use it.

Objection is often made that the members are not spiritual enough to do visitation Evangelism. If a certain percentage of them at least are not, it is an awful commentary on past pastoral training. Experience indicates, however, that it is not as bad as that in hardly any church. Honest human efforts to win men will naturally become spiritualized, and the supposed spirituality, which is fruitless, of many pious members would then be impossible.

The fact is that the average church member is about as spiritual as the average of the twelve apostles. Jesus did not always get a hundred per cent co-operation from them. The work of some of them is unknown. Peter's sin was such that rarely would we find a Christian to-day who would duplicate it. Few could be compared with Judas. He sold his Lord for about thirty dollars, while most of the leading men in any church give yearly much more than that to the cause of Christ.

Human nature is about the same to-day as in that day. Besides, we have many advantages which the apostles and early disciples did not have, including the accumulated experience of nineteen hundred years. The greatest thing to fear in individual Evangelism is that most Christians will never even try to function. But we may be encouraged by the evidences of the recent rebirth of lay Evangelism.

IX

THE REBIRTH OF VISITATION EVANGELISM

TWENTY-SEVEN years ago, H. Clay Trumbull, in his book, *Individual Work for Individuals,* refers to his being at the home of a Sunday School superintendent who told him how he had been won to Christ and the Church in a lay visitation effort put on by the village church. He had received them jokingly but made his decision before their departure, and shortly after had been chosen as the best man for the task of Sunday School superintendent.

Dr. Trumbull did not know the name of the leader of the movement. This reference made so long ago, to a method used in isolated cases years before that, is an indication of the slowness of the churches to accept the idea, even though there was demonstration of its rich possibilities. The orthodoxy of the public method was too entrenched, to permit any change for many years to come.

In reading a fine and typical book on Evangelism, published in 1910, of a practical nature, too, only one page was on personal visitation. Moreover, by personal visitation only survey purposes were meant, and no mention of winning any one was made. Even the sending out of the seventy was referred to, but only

house-to-house ascertaining of facts and inviting to church was suggested. This reference merely illustrates the inexplainable absence of recognition of visitation Evangelism by an author in 1910, in a book of unusual merit in its Scripturalness and practicalness.

In 1912 a new book on Evangelism, of a practical nature, entitled, *Making Religion Efficient*, gives one paragraph to visitation Evangelism. "The two-by-two plan is an unusual campaign in which men in groups of two unite once a year for a given number of weeks in spending their evenings in calling upon selected men with the express purpose of asking them to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord." This is the lone reference to any Evangelism even similar to what we know as visitation Evangelism.

It is told how Rev. Constance L. Goodell came to discover the pastor's personal method. "I had a row of bottles that I wanted to fill from my hose. First I fired into the air, hoping that some water would fall into the bottles, but every variation of the wind carried the spray away so that only a few drops entered, but turning the hose into each bottle separately they were soon filled." Seventy-five years after this it is recorded in 1922 by a leader in Evangelism that after that discovery, Pastor Goodell in the next two years received one hundred and fifty persons into his great church.

Since 1922 many churches, through teams of laymen, have received more than that number of persons won by them in one week, not one hundred and four weeks. This is usually true, if a live pastor can win

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one hundred persons personally in one hundred and four weeks, ten per cent of his members can win one hundred persons in one week. The few leaders in lay Evangelism are demonstrating this every week from September to June, in all kinds and sizes of churches, in every denomination. The church members need this experience and personality-builder as much as the pastor.

During the years which elapsed after those few isolated cases of systematic lay Evangelism occurred, there was no doubt much emphasis on what came to be known as personal work, mostly practiced by pastors and occasionally by strong laymen. But, after all this feeling about for the best method, lay Evangelism gradually began to be anticipated. References like the following began to appear about ten years ago: "We are at the dawning of the day of personal Evangelism, and everyone is called of God." "The era of Evangelism upon which we have entered emphasizes individual work for individuals." Yet as late as 1923, in a prominent book by a well-known evangelist, in a chapter on "Evangelism for the Outsider," the only methods suggested were of a public nature, such as meetings on the street, on beaches, and in shops.

Within the next several years visitation Evangelism was rapidly having a rebirth on a scale far larger than in any age since New Testament days. Still, in 1928, although visitation Evangelism has been heard about more or less in some sections of the United States, comparatively few churches in those few sections have

actually experienced a visitation effort, and very few other churches appreciate what such an effort really is, in all its simplicity and fulness. The latest book on Evangelism says, "All Christian workers are now aware of the coming renaissance of lay Evangelism."

Thus we have noted the rebirth of visitation Evangelism, in new power under leaders who have made it their life task. The rebirth has been so healthy that the movement should live. It is never out of date. So long as the Bible is the Christian text-book and human nature remains the same this method will be the most Scriptural, reasonable, and productive of results.

X

REASONS FOR LAY EVANGELISM

"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." This is the greatest reason for lay Evangelism: that a Christian obey Jesus. Moreover, "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." As Dr. Kernahan points out, "Jesus won every outstanding follower by the personal method. His immediate followers carried on their work in Evangelism by personal interviews." Chapter Two carefully studies Scriptural Evangelism, and it is clear that lay Evangelism is the regular method. "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

The first impulse of a converted person is to help others to become converted; this impulse is continued by remembering why we were converted. Unless there may be such a thing as selfish salvation, the salvation of a person puts him in a position where it is a great joy to turn about and save others.

Another reason is that the great benefits of being a Christian involve commensurate responsibility. Of him to whom much is given, much is required. As the Old Testament put it, if we warn the sinner from his way and he heed not, his blood is on himself, but if we warn him not, his blood is on us.

We need laymen, not lay figures. Sophie, the scrub woman, once said, " Some people say I was talking to a wooden Indian outside of a cigar store. My eyesight is poor; maybe I did. But that is not so bad as being a wooden Christian who never talks at all to real persons about Jesus."

The business of the world is done through personal contacts, not the lecture method. Its next best method is the use of the mails in spreading its propaganda. Think of all the items which come to people daily concerning secular interests, and hardly ever an item about Jesus and His Church. Under the very eyes of the Church, one " ism " alone, that is a substitute for the Christian Church, and an avowed enemy of all churches, has grown approximately from a membership of forty thousand in 1916 to two hundred thousand in 1926, through the personal method. An engineer asked Moody to ride in his cab the forty miles into Salt Lake City and tried to convert him to Mormonism. Every Christian Scientist is a personal worker. Mohammedanism has spread by the same means.

The vocal word is as old as the race and each person can put it to no better use than the encouragement to decision for Christ.

No one ever was saved except through the agency of one or more Christians. There is no record of the Holy Spirit winning anyone to Christ without the agency of some Christian.

Witnessing for Christ strengthens the witness. Every visitation effort in a church indicates how true

this is with all the visitors. In one city I was being entertained at the home of a young couple. He was a bank clerk, and she was industrious in doing what she could to help pay for the beautiful cottage where they lived. She boarded two school teachers, and had an aged mother and two small children. She had charge of the five visitors' suppers, which she directed from the telephone.

On the Sunday morning before the week of visitation began she said to me at the breakfast table, "Why cannot I attend the visitors' instruction class this afternoon, and be a friendly visitor, too? This is the one task in which I am weak. I've had no experience in it. I think it would help round out my Christian personality." "The pastor probably thought you had enough to do without visiting, but would be pleased to have you in the visitation if you find it possible," I responded. This woman was a strong, growing character, because she recognized the laws of growth.

A letter from a former friend won the decision of H. Clay Trumbull. This experience he recounts in the little classic written twenty-five years ago, *Individual Work for Individuals,* which every Christian should read. Among other fundamental findings is this, "As a rule, the intensity of the appeal is in inverse proportion to the area covered." This is an age-long maxim in Evangelism.

Thirty lay workers are named by Paul. The folks they won were no more important people or different people than laymen can win to-day. Reference to

them by the Scripture writer is not to indicate the unusual type of their converts, but as an example to us of the natural working of Evangelism among ordinary people, persons such as we may also win.

The " greater things than these " which Jesus promised we should do are based on personal work. Because the hosts of laymen have never been marshalled and led, innumerable millions have died without professing Christ.

Reproduction by each Christian is the law of growth of the Christian population, as it is the law of growth in nature. See Matt. 13:33; John 12:24; Matt. 13:8-23; Gen. 1:28.

Vocational pastors have not been and never will be an agency sufficient to convert the world and keep it converted. No farmer doing business of even any moderate amount would attempt to reap the harvest without farm help. Should such a practice be at all general, the waste and loss to our country would be appalling. No more is the pastor single-handed equal to the task of getting into his church the great harvest of souls waiting to be won to Christ. A pastor cannot present the invitation of Christ adequately to every person in his constituency, because of various limitations, of either personality or time.

The whole Church is needed for the whole task. Only this assures a thorough impact with the necessary contacts that God can bless. Laymen often have vantage points in dealing with people which pastors do not have. Among innumerable similar experiences are two which occur to me now. As soon as we sat

down in this certain home, the man of the house apologized for the lack of proper heat in the parlour because of the new radiator not working properly. To his delight my partner examined it and called for a couple of simple tools, and adjusted it so that steam at once filled it. This prospect, who had put off even the pastor, made his decision an hour later in an atmosphere of kindred souls.

At another home was found a woman of about forty years of age. She had been indifferent to the Church and even her little boy of ten was not attending Sunday School. My partner, when he saw her at the door, exclaimed, "Your maiden name was not Miss so-and-so?" "Yes," she responded. His conversation with her was unusually friendly and frank, and she made her decision just as her husband and the boy returned from the moving pictures, and they decided also. His unusual interest and influence were explained when we left the home. "I used to keep company with that girl," he said. "I lost track of her and she has so changed that I could hardly recognize her to-night. She was a beautiful young woman. When I realized what she had missed all these years, and her need of Christ and the Church, for her sake and her family's sake, I threw my whole soul into the business."

Any one who has looked into the matter knows how much more readily young Christians can win those of equal age. Always in visitation efforts, two lads of about fourteen years will win other young lads whom the older visitors cannot win or reach. In Pittsburgh a young lad failed to win his chum in a campaign in

his church, but later in the season, at another church he met me with him after the service, and said that that night his chum's decision was made and both of them wanted to go out the next week in visitation to win lads to Christ and the membership of this church. This they did, and were needed badly, because this church had no young people at work.

The greater unwillingness of the community to attend evangelistic meetings emphasizes the need for the church to visit the community. Visitation does reach the nonChristian. The Church must win people where they are. Such a successful and outstanding apostle of public Evangelism as Dr. Biederwolf writes, "Revival messages are for Christians, evangelistic messages are for those who have not yet accepted Christ. The best place to-day for evangelistic speaking is in the homes of the nonChristians of the world. They are not in the churches to hear it, and the most of them are not idling in the streets to hear it. The world is at work or at home. In the world's homes the vast audience awaits the good news, the Gospel." Dr. Kernahan concluded in regard to his own mass meetings for winning converts, "No impression was made on those desired. The church life was no different six months later. Old members were not prepared to assimilate newcomers."

Our greatest human asset in Evangelism is members, our active, earnest, intelligent membership especially. Let me have fifteen per cent of the membership of any church, anywhere, any time, and they will win more persons to Christ and the Church in one week from

amongst the church constituency than any evangelist could win in two months from the same constituency by public meetings. Any experienced leader would do the same. It is the usual thing to have the pastor say, "We have had the outstanding evangelists and evangelistic pastors of the country in this church during the past years, but in none of those efforts have so many people been won as now, nor have the members had this experience of building up their personality that our members have had in this visitation effort." Then why longer keep our members in inaction, and depend upon costly evangelistic meetings which get far less results?

Christian personalities, with all their varieties and powers, are God's greatest and most indispensable assets in winning people to Christ. There is no substitute for a functioning personality. Each personality exercises an influence upon a prospect a little different than does another. God should be given freedom in using every personality. Therefore, use of all is needed. Christians are essential for God's best work. The most skilful worker cannot do his best work with inadequate or insufficient tools, neither can God.

A tool may be insignificant, but God knows how to use it effectively. A sincere approach by a weak worker may have a peculiar effectiveness with the prospect which would be impossible through a stronger personality. The man stuttered. He had an embarrassing hesitancy in speaking. The pastor did not invite him to the instruction for tentative visitors on

that account, but he appeared and at the close signed up on the card for nightly service.

The pastor asked me what should be done. I told him he might not appear Monday, as he would no doubt get timid because of his defect. But he came to the supper conference and the pastor inquired how he might be put off. I advised him to assign him with one of the less talented young men and let them go where no harm could be done. But this man led the team and won more than any other team, so that he was working effectively among our important prospects in a few nights.

Why did he succeed? I do not know, but suspect that his earnestness and fine spiritual life were compelling in spite of his handicap.

On another occasion my partner, a deacon, who went into the visitation gingerly and doggedly, realizing his inabilities, as soon as we entered a home apologized for being so late in bringing the invitation. " Mr. So-and-So, I have been a member of my church for twenty years, a deacon for five years, and have never spoken to you about accepting Christ or joining my church. To-night I have come to ask you to do both, but first I wish you to forgive me for my neglect." This was about all he could say, but it created a fine atmosphere, and his work every night was especially productive.

Unconscious Evangelism is a good foundation, but conscious Evangelism must get out and win people. Our niceties may preserve us in our church, but only an aggressive winning of men definitely to Christ and

His Church will save men and leave a church larger and stronger behind us.

Trumbull's last conclusion is, "Individual work is less spectacular than public platform work, with less glamour and glory about it. But while appearing insignificant in operation compared with public effort it is more significant in actual results."

Many pray that the world may be won for Christ, but soul-winners make the best world-winners. "Reaching one person at a time is the best way of reaching all the world in time." When your audience is one, you stand a better chance of winning your whole audience.

Too many Christians are living a repressed life. How pitiably helpless they are when asked suddenly to converse with one about Christ. Most folks are not themselves; repression has been at work so long.

The world will experience Christ when enough Christians do. As we go, the world will come.

The great central hosts of the population need our religion, not merely the submerged tenth and the four hundred. "Without religion the moral and physical progress of those great masses of humanity who carry the fortunes of civilization can never be assured."

The Church can only be saved by functioning adequately in visitation Evangelism. It must propagate; it will die unless others enter it. Dr. A. H. Strong expressed the idea well: "My greatest concern is lest we should cease to be a witnessing Church. When the Romans shortened their swords, they lengthened their territories. The Church that ceases to be evan-

gelistic will soon cease to be evangelical, and the Church that ceases to be evangelical will soon cease to exist."

Bishop Hughes was thinking the same when he wrote: "I have long been certain that, if we are to be truly apostolic we must return to the visitation plan." Protestants especially, and especially the more Protestant they are, need the personal method, for we lack the magical elements which are utilized by our Roman Catholic friends in holding their people. The Roman Catholic pagan introduction of a clergy and a laity elevated the few to honour, authority, and leadership, in winning folks, as in all other Church matters. This brought the Dark Ages upon Christian civilization.

Again persecution set in to arouse Christians to obey Christ and to be witnesses of Him. This Protestant movement made great headway, but still we have far to go before the Church is made a democracy and all the members are freed and educated to be witnesses of Christ.

Lay Evangelism assumes the possibility of enough intelligence in the layman to be a witness of his Christ. Pastors who do not see that their members are trained to witness, and expect them to witness, insult them by lack of faith in their latent ability, and present themselves as negligent in their office of overseer or developer of the saints. Lay Evangelism is anti-clerical.

Let every pastor present his members with the alternative of either living in the Dark Ages without personal witnessing or living in the first ages of per-

sonal witness. The first ages were glorious in intelligence, heroism and spiritual conquest. The Dark Ages of ecclesiastical religion and stunted Christian discipleship made murderers of the laity.

A world-wide, intelligent, witnessing Christian laity would solve most if not all of our social problems such as racialism, militarism, and industrialism. The proof of this is brought out in bold relief when we realize how lost in utter bewilderment laymen of a purely ecclesiastical system are in any religious discussion. They have not been taught to think, and most of them know it and keep still. Many of our Protestant laymen are little different.

Perhaps four-fifths of our members never see a weekly religious newspaper. In my first pastorate, I was visited by the representative of a denominational paper, and asked to introduce him to a few of the leading families. I offered to take him to every family in the church and constituency. We spent four days together going through the village and the countryside. To get an auto and driver two days I had to agree to assist the farmer in helping him make hay for two days later in the week. The representative secured seventy-five paid subscriptions of two dollars and a half each. He said this was his best record for a church of one hundred and fifty members that he had had or heard of in his thirty years' experience.

If pastors of small churches and some appointee of large churches would actually take the representative of a paper to every home, the above experience would be the regular occurrence.

The objective of every Christian pastor should be to so train the members that they will not need him and shall become teachers themselves. The Protestant idea should be to have a minimum of clergymen, the less the better. The pagan religious idea is that the people forever need priesthood and should forever support the same. The Christian idea is that every person should have the intelligence and fellowship with God that needs no human intermediary. The forces of evil hate the witnessing of every member. We can perpetuate pure ecclesiasticism or we can perpetuate real discipleship with only what leadership may be purely democratic and Christian. God is waiting for a rebirth of Christianity. His Church has been trifling with Jesus' idea of a Christian discipleship.

XI

IS EVANGELISTIC VISITATION EASY?

Why should visitation Evangelism be easy? Is laying bricks all day easy? Is operating a typewriter all day easy? Is a day of salesmanship easy? Is making hay easy? Is mountain climbing or burden-bearing ever easy? When some people hear of one hundred and fifty decisions in an effort of visitation, they think the task must have been easy for those visitors. But the fact of it is that a thousand visits were made by fifty teams in order to win that hundred and fifty. A thousand hours were used by people after their day's tasks were over. It is normally hard work that wins most converts, just as it is normally hard work that accomplishes anything else worth while in this world. It would be contrary to the laws of God in His world if winning people were easy.

There are always difficulties in any task: but practice in overcoming them makes skilful workmen. The more we do the work of friendly visitation the less we are bothered by difficulties. Essentially, any legitimate task is simple, not complex, and visitation Evangelism really has a minimum of difficulties. The person who finds it unusually hard to do, probably lacks practice in doing it.

A certain bishop advocated visitation Evangelism,

but told the laymen that it was difficult for him to do. He was frank, but needlessly and harmfully so. If he had been altogether frank, it might have been better. He could have explained why it was so difficult for him to do; that the nature and peculiar demands on the time and talent of a bishop in the making, and especially a bishop in operation, hinder him in getting enough practice in personal work to do it with facility. It is related by another bishop that he dreamed he was unable to get into heaven, because he had brought no one with him. The angel told him to go back to earth and finish his task. A person who talks to ten prospects in a heart-to-heart way every three months for a year, will find the work no harder than any task after the same amount of experience in it.

We must present visitation as a normal work, natural to functioning Christians. Jesus said, "Ye are witnesses of these things." See how naturally Jesus asked the woman for a drink of water in opening up the conversation. We must have seeing eyes before we can have reaping hands. Harvesting is a natural pursuit. We must learn that it is as natural to reap people for Christ as to reap corn for the granary.

Too often it has been made, and therefore looked upon as unnatural. Unnaturally functioning personal workers make the prospect feel as uncomfortable as the worker does. We largely create in the prospect the mood in which we are entertained by him; and this mood in turn reacts on us. Our attitude must be natural if we would have a natural situation.

Christians in normal fellowship with Jesus, will have faith in obeying His mandates; and fear cannot be where faith reigns. A person who fears to do visitation evangelistic work should check up on the quality of his real Christianity. "Perfect love casts out fear." When a man has had an experience with Jesus, he can encourage other men to have an experience with Jesus also. "Does Jesus love this prospect?" "Yes." "Then I shall." We must be devotees of the art of real Christian living, then this work will be natural and not unduly difficult.

One writer says, "The most difficult work of the preacher to-day is the work of personal Evangelism. This is the field most neglected, yet is the field that would be most fruitful." A pastor to whom this work is difficult cannot successfully lead his members to do the work. His attitude will become theirs. One great reason why the experienced leader in visitation gets the members actually at work is because of his attitude that the work is normal and natural to every Christian. This creates an atmosphere conducive to action. There will then be the bold daring of simple faith.

What should be very difficult, and is, is "the incessant evangelistic preaching to Christians which is like continually sowing corn in a field of standing corn."

Many preachers hesitate to do individual work. They were never trained for it. Says the great French preacher, Bossuet, "It requires more faith and courage to say two words face-to-face with one single

sinner, than from the pulpit to rebuke two or three thousand persons who are ready to listen to everything on condition of forgetting all."

Christians who are winning men will rejoice in co-operation with other Christians in the same work, and sincere Christians should make every necessary effort to co-operate with those who are great winners of men.

Lastly, with practice comes skill, then joy in the work. Every skilled mechanic, writer, or worker of any sort, enjoys his work. The efficient worker is happy at his work. As Christians become acclimated to visitation Evangelism, they will be very happy as they discover new conquests with growing efficiency. The work will be neither easy nor difficult, but just wholesome, natural, happy work, with the richest returns that any work can have. This gives visitors in visitation Evangelism their supreme satisfaction.

XII

HOW TO HAVE AN EVANGELISTIC EFFORT

I. OVERCOMING REMAINING OBSTACLES

After all the season of purely revival effort accomplished in preparing for the evangelistic visitation, there may and probably will be some obstacles in the way of having an evangelistic effort, of any kind. When the effort contemplated is one of visitation effort it sometimes has obstacles peculiar to itself as well as obstacles common to any effort.

The greatest obstacle when preparatory revival meetings end is the attitude of having done enough on the part of some members, whose revival interests were mostly an act of penance, and now they wish to be let alone that they may rest from further special effort.

The opinion of the thoughtless might be that no special effort is necessary, that now the church having been revived, the members will function somehow, without united effort, in an indiscriminate way. They do not realize the value of a stated period of Evangelism with united effort under careful leadership. The values in having a series of revival services must be emphasized again, as mostly the same reasons for having an evangelistic effort.

United concentration for instruction in and doing

of friendly evangelistic visitation over a definite period of a week has values which are obtainable in no other way. The best way to have a church evangelistic all the year is to stress Evangelism at certain seasons of the year.

Unbelieving members may be obstacles. Indeed, when objections are analyzed, they usually are found to be a species of unbelief on the part of Christians. The only enemy this effort can have is not outside of the church, but inside of the church, an unbelieving member. These should be referred to the worshipping doubters in the last chapter of Matthew. These should be reasoned with privately, rather than that the whole congregation be harangued or chastised. A pastor told me that one prominent officer would not vote to have the effort until after the pastor had said to him, " Will you take the responsibility of voting to keep a hundred people from deciding for Christ? " This startled him into seeing the consequences of his vote one way or the other. He voted for the effort and then helped to win over one hundred decisions.

The true attitude to Jesus and men will remove problems. The love of Christ in the pastor will find a way to victory. Passionate loyalty to Jesus, His methods, and commands, will make the pastor an agency for " all power in heaven and on earth."

II. THE HARVEST IS ALWAYS READY

" The fields are ripe unto harvest," said Jesus. This has always been true, and never so true as in this latest day of Christianity. The vast majority of hu-

manity will continue to die without the adequate invitation which we have had. Every door is open to-day as never before. This is the time of immense opportunity.

A farmer was driving along a country road. Suddenly he exclaimed as we were passing a corn field, "Too bad! Too bad!" "What is too bad?" said I. "That corn has been ruined by the frost. It should have been harvested." Being reared in the city, I did not view the scene intelligently enough to be moved at the sight as the farmer was. Jesus was moved as He beheld the fields white unto harvest, especially with the certainty of the loss of the possible harvest through lack of reapers. We must realize that a harvest unreaped, rots. While we fail to reap the souls about us for Christ, we will not care to pray for world salvation, nor could we sincerely.

Workers are always surprised that so many people are all ready to decide. The many not ready to decide need cultivation and continued visits. We need not work up an evangelistic effort nor sit down and wait for one; but we need to obey Jesus in going out to try to win people.

III. WORKERS ARE READY—USE THEM

Do not expect, even after the revival meetings, that all the members are going to be evangelists. There will still be all degrees of loyalty to Jesus. The following item from the past should encourage many pastors, for it indicates that churches were always loathe to be unanimous in having evangelistic efforts.

In a Manual of Revivals, published in 1884, the author says, "Rare indeed are the churches that at the beginning of a work of grace unanimously give their voices in favour of it. Let the pastor commence with securing the co-operation of a few prudent and trustworthy helpers, remembering the army of Gideon." We should be cheered by the fact that there are in proportion to their membership more than Gideon could muster.

The number of tentative workers ready in the average church runs from about twenty per cent in the church of a hundred members to eight per cent in a church of two thousand members. There are enough Christians ready to win their community and the world to Jesus. Some of the workers are ready to volunteer. Use them. But first they need instruction in the technique of the art of winning decisions.

While no official action of the officers or of the church is needed to permit the pastor to lead those of his church who are willing into evangelistic work, yet it is the better thing to do. Why not call the officers together and get them to recommend that the church make an evangelistic effort of a sane, helpful and fruitful nature, as the pastor may wish to introduce, whether under his leadership or that of some one else.

Every officer may not vote "Yes" on this proposition, but most of them will because of the revival season just closed. If some officer hesitates to vote "Yes," he will not vote "No." After the revival preparation of an edifying nature, and after an intel-

ligent presentation of the request for official recommendation of an evangelistic effort, any officer who will not vote to follow the pastor is likely to be unwilling to do personal visitation later and his conscience is disturbed. Such an officer should be left alone and the pastor should use the recommendation of the official group as a whole.

This recommendation of the officers should be presented to the church, which will always vote to act favourably on any recommendation of the officers. In case of the unwillingness of a majority of the officials to act favourably in recommending an effort to the church, the pastor will need to be guided largely by the reasons for such an unusual situation. Usually such a situation could not occur after a revival preparation had been sponsored by the officers and church.

At the close of a two weeks' revival and visitation effort with a nationally outstanding church, the pastor gave me his personal check for my services of the two weeks. He then explained that a year before when he presented the matter of having an effort and engaging a leader to his official group, protests were so quick in arising that he dropped the proposition without a vote by introducing other business. His prayer meeting group, being the spiritual heart of the church, were next presented with the subject, and they voted to back the pastor in the matter. Upon that, he had arranged to use me. The Sunday following my departure, I having finished on Friday night, thank-offering envelopes, which had been mailed to every member, were returned. Of these, forty alone

contained about three hundred dollars. The officers were so pleased when they heard of what was for them a phenomenal ingathering of about fifty-five decisions, that they voted to auspice the finished effort.

The pastor told me six months later that one hundred and fifty-two new members had been received since the effort began. This indicated that the church had continued in the work when I was gone. This pastor was strengthened amongst his leaders because this master stroke of his leadership proved he knew their situation better than they.

Whatever happens, do not discuss the matter unprofitably, or arouse antagonism; but do what can be done, quietly and inoffensively. Love and heroism will show the leader how to lead. This indicates how to have an evangelistic effort initiated. We next consider preparation for such an effort, the instruction of visitors, and other developing subjects.

XIII

SPECIAL PREPARATION FOR THE EVANGELISTIC VISITATION

I. PREPARATION OF THE LEADER

A LITTLE experience in winning decisions indicates that the greatest preparation for getting decisions is always already made, in regard to all concerned, the workers and the prospects. God has been preparing folks in a thousand ways. Influences have been at work in lives which Jesus wishes us to capitalize at once for Him. There is hardly any case where some one's prayers have not been rising for years.

While shaking hands at the door at the close of a Sunday night service in my own church I selected a man, as my custom often was, to whom I said, "I would like to walk home with you to-night." He waited for me, and then referred to the fact that his automobile was under repair, so that he was walking. As we walked along, a very intimate conversation developed. We conversed in his home. We had refreshments. The family retired. We continued talking on religious themes.

There were many questions of an historical and philosophical nature which he put to me. Even church polity came in. Purity of Christian living naturally was discussed. Finally, thinking it must be toward

midnight, I looked at my watch, and was shocked to see that it was half-past three. Rising abruptly, I apologized for the long visit. The man, old enough to be my father, with a large experience in many ways, said to me, "Mr. Cooper, you need not apologize. You have been the first person in my life to talk to me more than a few minutes on religious matters. I thank you." I felt assured that the man would shortly make his decision.

On Thursday night he quietly came forward in the meeting, thus indicating his decision. I baptized him and he became a faithful Christian. His beautiful wife was overjoyed, as she said to me, "I have been praying for his decision for twenty-five years." There is many a husband, son, daughter, and mother who needs the careful, loving conversation of a new voice to be led over the line into the ranks of Christ.

But we would suggest that special treatment be experienced by the pastor, officers, members, and prospects.

The pastor will have gathered together an evangelistic library. Books helpful in inspiring to, and training in *modern* Evangelism are not numerous, but some have been appearing. Following is a list of a few that have come my way. There are, no doubt, other books that should be included, but this list contains most of the suitable ones. Included are a few books from former years that warm the heart and move the will, and teach much evangelistic philosophy, although, of course, far removed from visitation Evangelism.

Books for the Evangelistic Library

1. Books on Youth Evangelism.
   - *A. Evangelism of Youth,* by Albert H. Gage. This is indispensable, and should be basic in every church.
   - *B. New Youth Evangelism,* by John F. Cowan.
2. Books on Individual Work (arranged chronologically).
   - *A. Individual Work for Individuals,* by H. Clay Trumbull. This will always be a little classic.
   - *B. Personal Evangelism,* by J. C. Conant. This is a substantial and stimulating work of Scriptural exposition.
   - *C. Personal Evangelism,* by E. O. Sellers. This is a helpful study in work with individual types.
   - *D.* Booklet on *Visitation Evangelism,* by Guy Black.
   - *E.* Booklet on *A Course in Personal Work,* by A. B. Strickland.
   - *F. Visitation Evangelism,* by A. E. Kernahan. This book is the first most thoroughly practical treatment of visitation efforts.
   - *G. Adventures in Visitation Evangelism,* by A. E. Kernahan.
3. Books on Evangelism of the Public Type.
   - *A. Pastor-Evangelism,* by O. Olin Green.
   - *B. The Effective Evangelist,* by Lionel B. Fletcher.
   - *C. Evangelism,* by William Biederwolf.
   - *D. Evangelism,* by J. Wilbur Chapman.

E. Pastoral and Personal Evangelism, by Charles L. Goodell.

4. The Lives of Famous Revival and Evangelistic Leaders.

Francis of Assisi	Charles G. Finney
Savonarola	Dwight L. Moody
John Knox	J. Wilbur Chapman
George Whitefield	William A. Sunday.
John Wesley	

5. Books on Revivals.

Revivals, Their Laws and Leaders, by James Burns. This is a choice and beautiful study.

Such books will enlighten the mind, and fire the soul of the pastor with enthusiasm. The evangelistic mind and heart will be enriched afresh.

The pastor's evangelistic mood would be enlarged if he would also win a few persons before the effort begins.

What the pastor has been reading mostly is revealed in an evangelistic effort. I recall some pastors who were afresh from reading some of the above books, and how easy it was to co-operate with such prepared pastors.

All controversial subjects should be avoided as poison.

The officers and the church can usually rise no higher than their pastor. He must clearly lead the way, with no uncertain actions or hesitating voice. The people will follow a leader. By this shall all men know a pastor is a leader, they will hear his voice and follow him; but a faithless, tactless, and unloving pastor they will not follow; rather they will flee from him.

Of course we must not mistake creedal statements of narrow piety, of a certain unlovely type, for real holiness. The man of holiness while abstaining from even the appearance of evil, because he would sanctify himself for the sake of the brethren, does not maintain a "better-than-thou" attitude and nag and scold all others. He does not have a piety that rebuffs, but one which draws and transforms men.

The man of holiness should be beautiful, a Christian example whom all others wish to be like. The man of holiness will seek to be healthy in body and mind, and he will exercise both that each may command respect. He will realize that his body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and must be kept clean and in good condition that his mind must be true rather than either liberal or conservative. God can use the healthy body and the honest mind. That man given over to the uses of God will be a spiritual power, truly eloquent and having the fruits of the spirit in himself and in those to whom he ministers.

It is surprising sometimes to see how much peace and virtue and patience and truth a leader of little holiness can produce. It suggests the astounding possibilities of the finest type of Christian holiness. God is looking for better men; will we qualify? It takes more than phrase coiners and sermon builders to make men, it takes a man. A real preacher is God's man wooing other men to be God's men. What would Jesus think and do? This is still the best guide and help in holy living for each of us. Cold official treatment of those we meet daily is one of the severe pitfalls we

pastors must guard against. There must be some way to be brief with numerous callers, et cetera, and yet do it graciously and helpfully.

An essential is prayer-life of an enriching kind which demands concentration upon fellowship with God. Reading of a chapter of the Bible and some devotional book will stimulate daily praying. What a personality builder such a fifteen-minute period would be for the members of the family after the daily meal at which most of them could be present together. Such exercise should be natural and in a happy atmosphere. Some loving systematic period of devotion will cultivate the witness of God's spirit within the consciousness of the student of the mind of Christ. The earnest seeker will find that men of power have been men of prayer.

The evangelistic leader is on public inspection more than any other worker. Folks are studying him internally, externally and eternally. He must exercise extreme care in every detail of his life. Talents and large results have a tendency to spoil the earlier faith which made it possible for God to bless the evangelist. He must strive to keep humble and sweet. The ambassador must not act like the king.

II. PREPARATION OF THE OFFICERS AND THE CHURCH MEMBERS

The officers of the church should be prepared. Most of them are not. Some of them in most churches are inimical to Evangelism. They have been soured on Evangelism by false reports, unwarranted com-

K. C. K.

plaints, or unwise experiences. Much preaching comment and editorial comment of a derogatory nature has poisoned their mind against evangelists, and hence made them uninterested and antagonistic to Evangelism.

What the official board needs is less critical comment from pulpit and press on Evangelism, and a constructive program of Scriptural Evangelism. This is a means of exercise of the pastor's evangelistic gifts, and his first duty. Let him indoctrinate his officials with the need of Evangelism and the desire for a sane method and content. If it is worthwhile to spend hours with the official group on minor matters, and often red tape, how much more worthwhile to have them in conference under the wise and loving guidance of the prepared pastor, there to study the evangelistic situation and finally agree on a program of action. Then there will be less wondering as to how officer so-and-so feels about the proposed program when it occurs. The pastor must know, then teach his officers. Of course, I realize that God has blessed revival campaigns where half the officers were not in sympathy with the effort. But how much more beautiful would the effort have been, and the appeal to the community, and more complete the result if the officers had worked together.

It pays a pastor to be patient, courageous and thorough in preparing his officers. It usually takes more courage to patiently, lovingly, yet boldly, tackle the wrong-thinking deacon and right him, than it takes to go on without him. The pamphlets and books on

Evangelism should be given to the officers to read and report on at the next session of the officers or at prayer meeting.

The church members should be instructed in the same way. The officers can help in teaching them. To teach the members, system is necessary else only a few will be taught. Some method of affecting every last member should be put in operation. In doing this the backslider problem will be receiving treatment automatically. For as soon as members begin to think of their duty to others, they are apt to watch their own steps more closely.

It is a grand and productive work to take three or six months and prepare the church for action in Evangelism, an impact on persons in the community, which will lead many to Christ. Much training of the members who attend church can be done in the regular preaching, which can be full of concrete examples of lay Evangelism, and experiential in nature.

The officers and members must find out actually how Jesus won converts and emulate Him in this way. Among other things, they will want to cover the ground covered by this book.

The most adequate and complete book on Evangelism and Revivalism should be in the hands of every member, a well-bound copy that he will treasure and revert to often when the course is over. Such books should be used in the Study Courses, supplemented by the reaction of the pastor and the laymen. It would pay any church to supply such books to twenty per cent of its members for such a purpose.

The actual financial investment would be tremendously profitable.

The difficulty often has been that the pastor has read all the leading books on Evangelism and the members none. How can they be expected to be as intelligently interested as he when unacquainted one-hundredth part as much as he is. Actually to study several books would help to give them a perspective and forward look such as the pastor has. Such a book needs to be modern, well-balanced, practical, and written in a popular style, and yet be Scriptural and as scientific as any text-book. The need of such books helped to inspire the writing of this book. There certainly should be intelligent study of such themes and convictions as this book outlines. For group study purposes this book outlines the following course:

A SUGGESTED STUDY COURSE IN EVANGELISM
FOR GROUPS OF LAYMEN

1. Typical Modern Evangelistic Efforts
   a. In a Small Church
   b. In a Large Church
2. The Evangelism of Jesus
   a. Introductory
   b. Evangelistic References in the Four Gospels
   c. Disclosures in Analyzing the References in the Four Gospels
3. The Last Command of Jesus
4. The Evangelism of the First Disciples
   a. Evangelistic References in the Book of The Acts

b. Disclosures in Analyzing the References in the Book of The Acts
5. The Losses Through Lack of Evangelism
6. Some Causes of Evangelistic Inactivity
7. The Need of Adequate Evangelism
8. Visitation Evangelism
9. The Rebirth of Visitation Evangelism
10. Reasons for Lay Evangelism
11. Is Evangelistic Visitation Easy?
12. How to Have an Evangelistic Effort
    a. Overcoming Remaining Obstacles
    b. The Harvest is Always Ready
    c. Workers Are Ready—Use Them
13. Special Preparation for the Evangelistic Visitation
    a. Preparation of the Leader
    b. Preparation of the Officers and church Members
    c. Preparation of the Prospects
14. Discovering Prospects
15. Special Themes for Evangelistic Preparation
    a. The Wisdom of Evangelism
    b. Assumptions in Lay Evangelism
    c. A Clear Conception of the Church
    d. The Place of the Bible
    e. The Place of Prayer
    f. Conversion
    g. The Need of Decision
    h. The Cross in the Church Members, not merely on the Church Building
16. Child Conversion
17. Securing Possible Visitors

18. Teaching the Art of Friendly Visitation Evangelism
19. Concerning Decisions
    a. Reasons for Decision
    b. The Growth of a Decision
    c. Objections to a Decision
20. A Demonstration Visit on a Typical Family of Prospects
21. The Workers at Work
    a. Securing the Visitors
    b. The Necessity of Thorough Organization
    c. The Confessions of the Friendly Visitors
22. The Fruitage of the Effort
23. The Culture of the Converts
24. The Evangelistic Church—The Expectation of Jesus.

III. PREPARATION OF THE PROSPECTS

The secret of failure of much evangelistic preaching is the neglect in shepherding of the nonChristians in the community. The attitude usually is that only the members deserve the regular attention of the church. They pay practically all the bills and therefore are entitled to service. When going to a new church as pastor, I have never been handed a list of prospective members.

Jesus said something about not coming to save the righteous but the unrighteous, and that the whole need not the physician. Because of this I have never left a church without leaving an indexed list of every person in the community not belonging to or attending

some church. Usually the more service, teaching and fellowship a church has rendered in its community the easier it is to win people to Christ and the Church.

The pastor should appoint a service committee for directing a systematic cultivation of the prospects. This would be the finest piece of home missionary work a church could do. The committee should be representative, half men and half women, with youth on it. It should have at least five members in a small church and about two per cent more for each hundred members above two hundred. A real leader from the laymen should be told the purposes of the committee and asked to be the chairman in helping the committee realize those purposes.

The committee will make a card index of all persons on the prospect list on four by six inch cards, with plenty of room for recording the various coming contacts with the prospect.

It should arrange a list of friendly contacts between the members and the prospects. Every member should be mailed assignment cards directing them to visit certain prospects. With it should be a report blank for each prospect. Each assignment should be seen through to realization. Work a cross system of visits. Tell them that they are to be purely friendly visits.

Each visiting member should be supplied with tracts and books for use by the prospect, which should be offered in the right manner. Every prospect family should be influenced to subscribe for the best denominational weekly. Nothing will so educate the prospect

into readiness for decision and intelligent membership. I have tried this; it works.

Each organization in the church should be given a list of the prospects who are eligible for their department. Of course, all prospective members are religious more or less, for religious impacts are touching them in many ways. They hear the church bells ringing. They are made in various ways to know that Jesus is being studied in the churches and that to be a Christian should be the ideal of every person. Most of the non-attenders were in Sunday School years before. Some have had experience in answered prayer. However, special preparation should be given all the prospective members, of a definite nature with definite purpose, for they need to be definitely placed on the side of Jesus and His Church.

Experience teaches us that there will be very little personal touch of this kind unless there is an organized, comprehensive movement. The fundamental reason for this is that the world's work is done that way. It is the law of God for getting the world's work accomplished. Many pastors and churches need to learn this. The loss through indifference to this law or laziness in observing it will never be made up by an unnatural response of the Holy Spirit to foolish and insincere prayers for help from such shirkers.

The best way to get a large number to spontaneously shake hands and greet strangers at the church service is to set a definite number of workers at definite places in the church, to shake hands at definite times. Others will gradually get the idea and do it spontaneously,

and those who do not should then be definitely assigned to do it.

This definite preparation of the prospects will appeal mightily to the businesslike members of the church. It should not be advertised, but simply carried on. In thus directing the church to prepare the prospects, the church itself will be revolutionized and the community will have a new and finer appreciation of the church.

XIV

DISCOVERING PROSPECTS

When Moody was asked how to reach the masses, it is said that he invited all the preachers who asked him, to meet him at a certain church and he would show them. So he had Sankey get on a box and sing as men were going home from work. They were attracted by the singer. Then Moody spoke briefly and told the crowd that the meeting would continue at once in the place named and he would like all to follow, which many did, to hear Sankey sing and Moody speak. No doubt when the affair ended, there was no record of the unchurched in the crowd.

It was a striking thing to do, yet inadequate when we contemplate how thoroughly the unchurched of any community may be reached by any church, and without a Moody or a Sankey. To discover the community prospects for Christ and the Church, a house-to-house survey of the community must be made by the church. Any church can do this. We must know our field of operation. It always seemed to me that this rarely ever occurred to a church which contemplated an evangelistic effort. It was to be an effort, not an impact against definite persons.

I was approaching a church situated in an unusually large residential section of a good sized town. My

companion was a leader in that church and an official in that city, whose work as tax assessor made it necessary for him to have careful information about every house in town. He had been complaining about the weakness of his church, about four hundred members scattered all over the city, and wondering why the pastor could not get a larger congregation.

I asked him if the church had a record of the families living in these homes all about the church. "Why, no," he answered, as though he didn't quite see the point. "You are the tax assessor. Do you have any record of these properties?" "Of course," he said. "Then why not put the same business sense in the work of the church?" I replied. That church was built for that community, but it lost track of the community, and wondered why the community was indifferent to the existence of the church.

When I was telling one pastor with whom I was to conduct an evangelistic impact, my difficulty in getting pastors to make a thorough survey, he remarked, "I suppose some of them think you mean by making a survey, that they should go up on the highest hill in town and carefully look over all the community?" Yes, many church leaders fool around and worry themselves in making an incomplete survey record, instead of going directly in organized teams to every house and getting the information desired. They want to make their survey without even going up on the hill, but just sitting at their desks and scanning over the church member record, and Sunday School record, and jotting down a few names which occur to them,

of persons not belonging to their church, who will constitute the desired list of prospects for membership.

After such treatment of the community, the evangelist's heart has queer sensations as the pastor warmly pours out his soul in prayer before the first congregation for those dear precious souls out of Christ in his community. Oh the foolishness of such praying! I never went to a church yet as the new pastor and was handed an accurate list of the members of the church, or any list of the members of the congregation or unchurched persons in the community.

The first law of a church should be, "Know Thyself," and the second like unto it, "Know thy community as thyself." Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest." The harvest of the world is ripe. The harvest of the community is ripe. "Look," says Jesus. If a church will really look on its community, the reaping process is begun. When Jesus looked, He wept. The reason we do not weep more is because we do not look more. What made Jesus weep when He looked? What happens to a harvest when it is not reaped? It rots. Jesus saw the rottening processes of society about Him, mostly dry rot.

The church is too much blinded to the real situation of the community personnel, because hardened by the very inroads of the community life upon its own members. It follows the community too much instead of getting the community to follow Christ. The church that honestly looks at its community will involuntarily look at its own members. That is why,

when an evangelistic effort for converts is suggested, at once the question arises, "What shall we do to reclaim the backsliders and clean up the church members?" Therefore, look at the community, and all these other values will begin to be harvested.

What precedes harvest? Is it not observation of facts which moves us to prayer? Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, they are white unto harvest, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore that labourers be sent into the harvest." It was look, pray, work. We first must have lookers, then prayers, then workers.

The pastor can carefully make out a list of women workers of his church, who might be able to put in some time on a survey. On Sunday morning, at the close of the service, he announces that "the following named persons are asked to meet the pastor immediately after the benediction in the church parlour." They gather there and are seated. The pastor offers a brief earnest prayer for consecration of time and personality. He clearly announces the purposes for which a thorough survey could be used to help the community, honour Jesus, and build up His Church. He assures them of the pleasantness of intelligent work for those making the survey. They are to be carefully instructed on Wednesday night in the simple art of surveying and then are to go out in teams to make the survey.

"Now, I know you will all be present Wednesday evening, as you will recall I asked every woman whose name I called not to make any engagement for that

night, some time ago, as a most important occasion would need them on that date. Of course, some of you may have a very good reason, which is not a mere excuse, for not coming Wednesday evening, but if none of you so inform me now when I finish presenting this matter, I will assume that each of you will be present Wednesday evening, and I am expecting other women to be there beside you, so that we shall have a large number of happy and willing workers to study the art of making a survey, which a large and loyal group will assure but a reasonable, and not burdensome, share of the work to those engaging in it. I thank you all for your co-operation in such a cordial and prompt manner. Jesus must be pleased as He sees us properly attending to the King's business."

At night read other remaining names unchecked in the morning and give the same after-service treatment. On Monday get those signed up for the Wednesday meeting who were not present Sunday. Then let the pastor prepare for Wednesday night.

He will take a large map of the community, within a radius of five miles if necessary, from his church. He will mark off on it certain districts. On a sheet of paper he will write the definite streets included in a district, having as many sheets as districts. He should have duplicates. He should mark down the nature of each district, as to the type of families living in it, and as to the possible need of conveyance if it is an outlying district with scattered homes. This classifying of districts will enable him quickly on Wednesday evening, at the close of his instruction period, to couple

up the workers and assign each team a district most suitable to them.

This should be so carefully considered by the pastor as to avoid uncertainty on his part in making assignments. He should act with the precision of a commanding officer, in order to save time and foolish bickering, and assure soldierly and faithful carrying out of all survey instructions. He will announce that opportunity will be given to hear any suggestions privately at the close. We now set down some definite instructions for the workers.

You are going out like the seventy of old to attend to the Lord's business. It is supremely important business. An ambassador is strong because of the court behind him. Therefore you need have no fear. Perfect love of Jesus' cause casts out fear. You believe in Christ and His Church and the community's need of both. The purpose of this survey is to secure the religious facts of the community which will guide our church in meeting the religious needs of the community.

We are not going to forget this survey after it is made. The Sunday School will use it in securing new members. The organizations of the church will make it a source from which new personalities will be drawn into their activities. It will give the various organizations and classes their real field to cultivate. It will give the church definite information as to the relation of every family and every person in it to the Church of Christ. It will furnish new territory for Christian conquest. All this will result if the survey actually

includes every family, is honest, and accurate in every detail. Here is the survey card.

	Age	Where Member	Attend S. S.	Prospect
Family Name				
Address				
First Names Below				
.....				
.....				
.....				
.....				
.....				

Visitor: Notes over

One member of the team should hold this card on top of the pack of several cards, so that while the other teammate questions, the card-holder can write down the information. Go to every house and family.

The leader of the team rings the bell, and asks for the mother or father or any responsible member of the family. Upon seeing such person, the leader will say: "We are making a survey, what is the family name here? The address? Mr. ——'s first name? Is he married? Is the wife living here? Any children? Please name children slowly, with the approximate age of each, beginning with the oldest and ending with the

youngest. Are there any other persons living with this family? If so, what is the name and relationship to the family?" Beginning then with the man of the house, ask, "What church is Mr. —— a member of? Does he attend? Where?" Then likewise inquire of each person concerning the children's connection with the Sunday School or Cradle Roll, and any shut-in's relation with a Home Department. Make this exhaustive.

If it is absolutely certain that a family, in its entirety, belongs to another local church, and attends, it may be enough to merely note that fact, thus accounting for that family.

Persons will not like to admit that they are not members of some church or do not attend. Therefore, the worker must exercise great care in getting accurate information on that point. Many people will say right off, "We are Methodists," or "Baptists." Then the question should be asked: "Of what Methodist Church is the man of the house a member? Where? Locally or out of town?" This often gets the answer, "Well, he is not a member, but we attended the Methodist Church in Boston when we lived there." "Have you attended here in the past year? Or since you have been in this town?" "No," is a frequent answer. In other words, get the actual facts, make an honest survey. Have an eye open for the discovering of the unchurched. Get at the business right off, do not visit first. Visit after, if advisable to visit.

It should be emphasized that the name of every

person ten years old and up, who is not a member or attending some local church, should be secured. These are the community prospects.

Neither the rich nor the poor should be left unsurveyed. There are the neglected rich as well as the neglected poor. The worker should not judge any one as being impossible to win.

Before the meeting the pastor has written the streets in each district on an envelope, and placed survey cards in it. These envelopes are then read before the women and a volunteer is called for to take the envelope last named. The pastor does three things at this meeting. He sells them the idea of the value of a survey; he explains minutely how it is made; he secures a volunteer for each envelope, one at a time.

The smaller the church putting on the survey the smaller will be the community to be surveyed. A large church will have more workers to cover a larger territory. Nine out of ten churches refuse to make a survey. They would rather contribute financially with other churches to pay for a city-wide survey. But city-wide surveys, put on by disinterested persons, are usually rather fruitless.

Most churches in every situation, explain the impossibility of making a survey in their "peculiar" situation. I have never been in a situation yet, as a stranger, when we could not cover our field in less than a week. But a survey should be made months before an evangelistic effort. In hamlet and city, in farmhouses and apartment houses, in cottages and in mansions I have conducted surveys and they were

uniformly successful. That is why I know any pastor and church can make a survey if they will.

The next step is to register all prospects on prospect cards, one individual to a card. In my work I supply a card like the following, in size three by five inches.

PROSPECT CARD

Name .....
Address .....

REASONS FOR BEING ON PROSPECT LIST

.....is member.....Church Connection
.....in S. S.....Found in Survey.
.....attends.....Preference.
Other Information.....
.....
Team Names and Dates.....
.....
Reports and Follow-up Recommendations.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

These names are taken from the survey cards first. The church roll should be at hand for reference.

Then the relatives who are not members, of every member, should be set down, such as parents or children or wives or husbands, as suggested by going over the membership list.

Then every name on the Church School roll should

be considered and each one ten years old and up who is not a member should be listed.

The fourth step is the listing of all parents of students, which parents are not members. It should be assumed that each student has a parent. The parent's first name need not be known, and their address will probably be the same as the child's.

These four steps cover an exhaustive discovery of prospects which usually is twice, or more, as great as the membership of the church which makes it. These cards held before tentative evangelistic visitors later will be a powerful reason and lever for agreeing to be visitors. The size of the prospect list largely determines the number of converts. They cannot be won until discovered. Nor have I ever seen a church which had too many prospects listed. All they can list by the above method will constitute a respectable and legitimate objective for the evangelistic effort. It is the task of any church to meet its full task.

This is a casual covering of the subject, but every word should be taken literally, for it is based on varied experience and is the meat of the matter.

XV

SPECIAL THEMES FOR EVANGELISTIC PREPARATION

I. THE WISDOM OF EVANGELISM

We will see the wisdom of Evangelism as we begin to realize what value Jesus placed on every human being, and the length to which He went to save people. Men get excited over many a human drama in the affairs of this life, yet the drama of salvation through Jesus Christ transcends all others.

"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son; but he that sleepeth in harvest causeth shame." "Let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." The universe itself was needed to give the prophet his symbol when he wrote, "He that is wise winneth souls. And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Thus is wisdom applied more to winning men than to preaching to men.

Who wins a soul plays a worthy part in the drama of salvation. He comes to see that evangelistic work is the most glorious privilege, and not merely a Christian obligation.

The reward of winning men should encourage Christians to apply themselves to that work. He reaps

golden sheaves, he struggles for imperishable joy. "Are you not lonely?" was asked of a far-off lighthouse keeper. "Not since I saved my first man," was the answer. Anyone who is engaged all the time in evangelistic work could fill a book with choice experiences which reveal the richness of the work in human joy as lives are changed.

Changed lives are the great reward of the evangelist, to say nothing of the close fellowship with Jesus which doing his work makes possible. Helped by helping others is the way that wins, learned by happy lessons in the Master's school, is the refrain of a song we used to sing. Oh the fellowship of one or of thousands of souls whom we have helped to save! And what to look forward to in eternity! The "I thank you" from the many won is the grandest chorus that could ring in the ears of Christians down through the spaces of the eternal habitation.

This incident is typical of visitation Evangelism. Several teams had called on a young married man whose wife was a member, but who himself was not. Only occasionally did he attend church services. We called on Friday, the last night of the week's effort. The father came to the door, and seeing that company was in the living room, we asked to see our prospect alone. As the father went to the kitchen to get him we followed, and asked to remain there with him. The wife was with him and I asked her to let us be alone.

In fifteen minutes the young man, having been prepared by the other visiting teams, was now ready to

decide. I stepped to the door and called in the wife. As the door was closed, I told her she could congratulate her husband on his decision. As she put her arms around his neck, he wept and she smiled for joy. As they clung together my partner and I, without a word, left the house. It seemed that to have even said good night would have been sacrilegious. In the press on Sunday night, though he was baptized then, we did not speak to each other. Several months later a beautiful letter of gratitude came to me from him.

There they are, old men, old women, husbands, wives, sweethearts, boys and girls; I can see their delicate smiles of loving gratitude, in parlour and in kitchen settings, in the farm fields resting on the plow, deciding for Christ, and aside in the place of business, but most of them hearth-fire scenes that will forever glow in the memory of the saved.

We can share the sentiment of Bunyan, "I have counted as if I had goodly buildings in the places where my spiritual children were born. My heart has been so wrapped up in this excellent work that I account myself more honoured of God than if He had made me emperor of all the world or the lord of all the glory of the earth without it."

We rejoice with Paul, "For what is our hope or joy or cause of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy."

II. ASSUMPTIONS IN LAY EVANGELISM

All prospects are friendly. Some are more friendly

than the evangelistic visitors have ever learned to be. In Elmira my partner and I, after a few minutes of introduction, were offered home-brew by the lady of the house. She was a big whole-souled woman. I have been in many Christian homes and never been asked to have even a drink of lemonade. The world is still friendly and the visitors realize this more and more. All of society looms more and more before the minds of friendly visitors as one great system of friendly co-operation.

All prospects are religious. They have ever been so from the beginning. Paul found many very religious. Religious conversation is welcomed by all when it is friendly and decent and not censorious. They will converse longer on religion than either business or politics. It is hard to get away. God made them that way. The devil believes, and trembles, we are told. Practically all men believe, but they need to actualize their belief. This is the objective of friendly visitation of them.

All prospects know they are sinners, though most of them need to have it explained to them how Jesus actually saves.

Most prospects will eventually make a sincere and intelligent decision for Christ and the Church if adequate cultivation of them occurs.

Doubting, faithless church members are the only real enemy of the evangelization of the prospects.

The visitor must honour the peculiar religious background of each prospect.

Half of those who will be won were not won by

public effort in many years of opportunity to do so.

The winning of prospects will be the greatest stimulus to bigger and finer character in the visitor who wins them.

Friendly visitation is the happiest work, giving the most satisfaction, of any work Christians can do.

Experience has proven that any church, anywhere, at any time can do this work with phenomenal success.

The above assumptions must be at the heart of successful visitation Evangelism, and should be emphasized before the whole church.

III. A CLEAR CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH

The Church must be viewed where Jesus left it, nearest His heart, and the greatest thing in the world and in the place where it is found. The place of the disciples in the farewell prayer of Jesus should be remembered. He prayed only for His disciples and those who should believe through them.

The Church should be presented as the greatest thing in the community because of its origin, and its fruitage. It is the only thing Jesus said He would build, and it has become the mother of all the great things in society. Therefore the Church should be put first in the thinking and loyalty of its members and all the people of the world.

Jesus referred to it as His bride, using the most loving term possible. Jesus "loved the church and died for it." Can we do too much for it? "That he

might present it unto himself a glorious church, without spot or blemish, or any such thing."

When Paul came to see that persecuting the Church was persecuting God, as soon as his eyes were opened, before he ate, he joined the Church and had two great themes thereafter, Christ, and His Church. Critics of the Church who like to express their high appreciation of Jesus should come to see the Church through the eyes of Jesus. Put the Church in its proper place before the members and the prospects.

There can be no loyalty to Jesus without loyalty to His Church. The greatest book on the Church I have ever seen or heard of is that by Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, *The Building of the Church*. I thank the pastor who introduced it to me and only wish that every pastor and layman could study it.

On Sunday morning as we wend our way to the house of God, as we pass the houses of God of various denominations, let us remember that worshipping in them are Christians whose shoes we are unworthy to unloose. Let each new member know that he is not only joining one of the local churches, but in doing so, he is also joining the whole Church of Christ.

IV. THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE

The Bible should be the chart and compass of all evangelistic work. It has always been the basis and chief inspiration of all Evangelism. The Bible closes with, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come."

"The seed is the Word of God." We must sow human hearts with vital seed truths from the Gospels.

Better seed will assure better crops. Stick to the test-proven seeds of the Bible as experienced through the years among humanity. Speak the word of life, for " The words I speak unto you, they are . . . life " (John 6:63).

President Wilson wrote in his autograph for the millions of soldier's Bibles, " The Bible is the Word of life. . . . When you have read this Bible, you will know it is the Word of God, because you will have found in it the key to your heart, your own duty, your own happiness."

The Bereans were " more noble " because they examined the Scriptures daily and were thus well-grounded in the truth and its acceptance, and we are told especially that there were won of the men, and even of the élite women, not a few. A delegate from Czecho-Slovakia to the Baptist World Alliance, after remarking that he represented the holy land of Baptist martyrs, went on to say, " We believe more in the need of higher criticism of ourselves than of the Bible."

Daily, devotional study of the Bible will always be essential in preparation for Evangelism, as well as for regular Christian living. And yet lack of knowledge of the Bible is not a reason why any layman should refuse to engage in evangelistic visitation. Every Christian knows enough of the Bible to be of some use in winning others.

V. THE PLACE OF PRAYER

Sin and indifference block the way, but prayer opens it.

The obvious reason for the necessity of prayer in the life of the evangelistic Christian is so accepted that we give it less space than otherwise we would. It has often been emphasized when other vital factors have been entirely omitted.

Conversation with God produces an enlightenment, a condition, an obedience, that enables us to leave headquarters ready for the business of our God. A sentence by a reporter concerning Dr. Jowett entering the pulpit, lingers with me. " He seemed to be coming directly from the place of prayer."

Work without prayer is liable to be mere movement; prayer without work is pious laziness; but usually one who gets at the work of Evangelism came to it by the way of sincere prayer. " This kind comes only by prayer and fasting." Men and churches need a time exposure before God in prayer. A sustained evangelistic effort is also a revealing time exposure. Jesus was imbued in prayer and we need the more to be so imbued. The nature of visitation Evangelism is such that we cannot attempt it until we do pray. " Jesus spoke a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray and not to faint." Prayer prevents fainting. The whole Church should be encouraged to constitute a praying band.

Much of our conversation in endeavouring to win people is a series of short prayers that they decide. We are searching heaven and earth and God for light and leading as we proceed, and the presence of Jesus becomes very real. It is quite usual for the visitor to hear a refusal to decide, and because of the earnest-

ness and seriousness of the situation he is constrained to pray openly as a last resort before leaving. And often at the close of the prayer the prospect makes his decision quickly and beautifully.

VI. CONVERSION

Conversion occurs in visitation Evangelism exactly as it always has in visitation Evangelism, as it occurred with the Ethiopian, the woman at the well, Zacchæus, Peter, Andrew, and the rest. There can be no sincere decision without conversion.

But Jesus simplifies conversion while men are apt to make it complex. Jesus expects a person to follow Him, to obey Him, to practice Him, to live Him. He is interested in fruitage and cross-bearing in the new disciple. An intelligent, sincere decision is sought; it is a decision to accept and follow Jesus as the Lord and Saviour of their life, and to confess Him before men, and come into the fellowship of Him and His Church.

To do the above is evidence of conversion, as it was of the conversion of Peter, Andrew and the Ethiopian. Men must be won to Christ and taught afterward. They must sprout from the vine before they can grow. Evangelism puts them in that relationship to Christ the vine, where they can grow in the knowledge and grace of Christ. A quiet conversion indicated in allegiance to Jesus in every-day faithfulness to God and man is more essential than an absence of that and living with obtrusive verbal affirmation of conversion. Many Christians have developed and catered to the

sensational in religion as others have in journalism and the drama. Yellow religion, journalism, and drama are all of the same stock—an unbalanced personality.

The conversion of the many from among the law-abiding decent citizenship may not be as sensational and interesting to look at or read about, but it is conversion nevertheless, and actually bulks larger in affecting the world's condition. For the sake of society this great group must be won.

Difficult, abstract, unreasonable theology will no more win them than it would in the day of Jesus. It was the expression of His love in understandable ways that won people. The conversion of Paul or the thief on the cross or the gaoler are not typical of the average conversion of normal-living people in a Christian community. Too often we have been using mission methods in trying to win men, women, and children in the normal walks of life, and we have thus obstructed our own objective, with unnecessarily outlandish methods.

We have been more method hardened than many of our prospects have been gospel-hardened. To most people in a Christian land, conversion is a natural, normal, agreeable experience. It is as reasonable as the conversion of the prodigal son, though the return journey may not be so far. As Harold Begbie says, "Profound and extraordinary changes of soul are experienced by the most ordinary men," but they usually have less initial sensational manifestation than the rare cases. He continues, "Conversion is not gener-

ally a sudden and catastrophic experience, but for most men a gradual and imperceptible process of development."

It certainly may be a change not marked at the time of public decision, a change that is certain but difficult to trace. Nicodemus tried to pin down Jesus on the matter of regeneration, but Jesus emphasized the fact of it rather than the process of it. The final test of conversion is the evidence of godliness instead of worldliness.

VII. THE NEED OF DECISION

We should seek to make a clean-cut presentation of exactly what immediate decision a prospect should make, and why. Any vagueness as to what, why, and when, is dangerous. Do not encourage contingent or modified decisions. Accept such conditional decisions, if no other is possible, but first try for an unqualified decision, an unconditional surrender of self to Jesus.

Folks need to see the necessity of joining the Church. Christian living includes this. Indifference of Christians in seeking decisions breeds indifference in nonChristians in considering decision. The preaching of principles is not enough, men must be placed under the banner of Jesus.

The prospect must be led into the valley of decision. Here he must be faced with the issues of life and death. "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that you and your seed may live." "With the heart man be-

lieveth, unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame."

Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The history of human experience in all lands and ages proves that Jesus has this life and can give it to men, and more abundantly.

"Whosoever hath seen me hath seen the Father." "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name given whereby we must be saved." Others may have hope, but the Christian has the hope and assurance. Decision for Christ should aid in making all the decisions of life.

The only reason why any one does not become a Christian is because he is not appreciative enough of Jesus. Real appreciation of the truth and love of Jesus will convert any person to Him, and I know of nothing else that will.

VIII. THE CROSS IN THE CHURCH MEMBERS, NOT MERELY ON THE CHURCH BUILDING

Visitation Evangelism can only be done by Christians in whom the cross of Jesus is being experienced. Our own drama of the cross must occur as a result of the drama of the cross of Jesus. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." "Who-so-ever will save his life shall lose it; and who-so-ever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Life only comes through the bearing of the cross. "Aren't you afraid you'll die?" some

one said to a missionary on the way to a dangerous station in Africa. "I died when I decided to go," answered the missionary. When a Christian decides to crucify self, he will obey Christ in witnessing for Him.

When we kill self, the selfish self, then Jesus can live in us. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Then, being a Christian is easy when Jesus lives in us. The love of Christ in us will constrain us to obey His dictates. If we love Him we will be glad to keep His commandments.

Surrendered lives are strong lives when surrendered to a noble purpose. We have been strongest in visitation Evangelism when we admitted our weakness, and relied on the Spirit within. "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

Only Christ in a person can make a Christian life possible. Our ability and lack of ability are not to be considered, only our surrender to Him. There should be no self to be offended. "Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." "He who humblest himself shall be exalted." Christ uses our personality. Faith in Christ's willingness to use one, and surrender, brings this Lordship of Christ. Then comes the new experience of Christ in us.

Toil and anxiety are anti-growth in the building of Christian personality. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." It is the life of Christ in us that grows. He works in us, "unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

" By grace have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." Winning men is the work of Jesus through our agency. Let Him have you, He will use you, in a wonderful and glorious fashion. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."

XVI

CHILD CONVERSION

For a score of years the Church has been more and more respecting the capacity of children for discipleship. The age of child entrance into the Church has been lowering. We seem to be slowly leaving the period when many denominations have failed to commit their child-life, thus losing irrevocably millions of decisions for Christ and the Church. They have no doubt realized that

> *"From very little boys have grown*
> *The noblest men the world has known."*

But they are beginning to see also that such children are capable of being Christian disciples. Still we start too late to make our children great.

Most great men were potentially great before twelve years of age. The vital battles of life that control the habits of after years are fought in the first few years of life. Ingersoll said that it was the first eight years of his life that made him an infidel. Polycarp was converted at nine years of age, Jonathan Edwards at seven years, Isaac Watts at nine, Drummond at nine, and Bishop McCabe at eight.

Figures given by Dr. Athearn concerning the age at which Sunday School teachers came into the Method-

ist Church show that more came in before ten years of age than after thirty-five years of age. The Christian Endeavour Movement, the Salvation Army, the Y. M. C. A., were started by young men. To-day the average age of entrance into the Methodist Church is about eleven years, in the Baptist and Presbyterian Churches about fourteen years. Entrance is made five years sooner than it used to be, thus adding millions of years annually to the years of Christian experience. The early entrance into the Methodist Church no doubt accounts to a large degree for its growth, which is far above the average of the various churches.

Some of our modern discoveries were very real to some leaders many years ago. That it is easier to save a child than a prodigal was realized by men like Spurgeon, who received over two thousand children into the membership of his church and never knew of one who was disciplined afterward.

Children may have a more real conversion than adults. Spurgeon said: "I will say broadly that I have more confidence in the spiritual life of the children that I have received into this church than I have in the spiritual condition of the adults thus received. I have usually found a clearer knowledge of the Gospel, a warmer love of Christ in the child convert than in the man convert. Some children of ten and twelve have had a deeper spiritual experience than some persons of fifty."

In *Revivals: How and When?* by Dr. W. W. Newell, published in 1882, is this paragraph: "Godly children should be in the Church. Such children at the age of

ten or twelve should be gathered with the children of God. They must see the loving Saviour and give themselves to Him. They must be converted to Christ. After prolonged evidence and proper instruction they should be welcomed to the table of the Lord. It is cruel to keep them out of the Church."

Dr. Biederwolf writes: "I have often thought that if I had a child of my own I would want that he should never need to experience what we understand by conversion, but that he should love his heavenly Father better than his earthly one."

Dr. Kernahan writes: "Children are Christians and do not need to be converted unless we allow them to go astray."

Principal Alfred E. Garvie thinks "there are religious experiences in which so conscious and decisive a change as conversion has had no place. As men live in Christ, they know that they have been born again, but when, where, or how this life began they know not." "I am doubtful whether 'conversion' is the most appropriate word to use in regard to children under twelve."

But the main interest is not to solve mooted questions but enlist life in its early years, for child-care is always preferable to later soul-cure. Children are not perfect, though far less sinful than youth and adults. They need the same exercise of will to forsake sin and cleave to virtue that anyone else has.

A child's experience is real and vivid. He is sensitive to neglect, and must be taken seriously in the evangelistic relation of himself to Christ. Sin is real-

ized at an early age. The child lives a real life, with its problems and temptations, its sorrows and joys. The capacity for faith in the child is greater than in the adult. Children are never infidels. The sense of the child may be greater than the logic of the adult. It is easy to take a dozen children from eight to twelve years of age and have each one take his turn in audible prayer, but it would not be so easy with a group from thirteen to eighteen years old.

Work with children is the most fruitful. They have less to unlearn when converted. Rather than being surprised at the conversion of children, we should be surprised if they are not won. The child's decision should be natural and simple, and indicate definite acceptance of and submission to Christ. The decision must be the child's, so he will always take pride in being true to it. Personal leading in private is more preferable than the wrong kind of group movement.

Personal relationship to Jesus is needed by the child more from eight years to twelve than ever after, because it will control the relationship thereafter to a large degree. Elementary principles are enough for them to know. Neglect of permitting and encouraging early decision in their children has often been regretted by parents in later years, when it is too late to interest them in decision.

Abnormal developments in young people are usually due to earlier neglect or mistreatment in childhood. Five boys of ten years of age deciding for Christ means two hundred and fifty years of Christian service, while five men of fifty years of age won may

mean only fifty years of service. An old person won is a soul won; a young person won is a soul plus a life. Wanamaker put it well when he said: "When you save a man or woman you save a unit; but when you save a boy or girl, you save a whole multiplication table." Early youth is the golden opportunity of Evangelism, later youth is its silver substitute, and after that its opportunity has hardly a silver lining.

Along with the impressional experience of the Church School it is essential to have the expressional values such as are possible through the young people's societies, such as the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior societies of the Christian Endeavour movement. A Junior C. E. society or its equivalent is an essential and makes possible strong older societies. Youth is naturally evangelistic, having the pioneer spirit of adventure. Young people are good workers for Jesus. They can do a work in soul-winning which cannot be done by any one else.

We must become as a child to win children, become conformable to childhood. They should be definitely encouraged, not discouraged. "See that ye despise not one of these little ones." Spiritual life is caught as well as taught. Act rightly in the presence of the young. Character is like sunshine, impressing itself noiselessly and gently upon all it meets.

Christian parents are most responsible for the conversion of their children. "But if any man provide not for his own, he is worse than an unbeliever." Deny not, then, their finest birthright, Christian nurture and committal to Christ at home. There should

be study classes for parents who have young children. Books and tracts on this subject could be taught. Every pastor can do nothing better than to introduce the book, *Evangelism of Youth,* by Dr. Albert H. Gage, to his officers and the parents of the church. He refers to the "seasons of the soul." There are definite stages of development in the life of each child.

Therefore we must have an understanding of the Evangelism of youth as a basis for our visitation Evangelism. The attitude of Eli, the leading-man of religion in his day, toward Samuel in finding it difficult to perceive that God was talking to a twelve-year-old boy, is suggestive. The very mother of Jesus was surprised at His interest in religion at His age. The brethren of the boy David were angry at his interest in the situation on the battlefield. Said his eldest brother, "You have come down that you might see the battle," and he fiercely upbraided the boy for his interest in the Lord's people. For forty days his brethren had refused to fight, and there could be no battle till now when the boy appeared, with youth's courage and faith aflame. The disciples were impatient with children. Paul cautioned young Timothy to "let no man despise thy youth."

Religious leaders have ever been prone to wander away from a sacrificial interest, and intelligent understanding of, and adequate attention to, children. Hence the failure to hold children and lead them into a lasting Christian experience. There is a right way, why not find and use it?

The period of most of life's decisions is in youth.

Dr. Gage points out some physiological reasons why some boys and girls of eight or nine years, are responsible to the call and command of Jesus. Such responses are like the first flowers of May, which we do not wish to crush because early in bloom, but rather would we rejoice in them and carefully protect them.

At twelve years of age the child is about to expand in a physical way and his susceptibility to religious appeal is God's way to conserve his physical development and assure its being Christian. Physical growth into young manhood or womanhood is dangerous without being controlled by Christian allegiance. When rapid physical growth sets in after twelve, that very growth is the chief interest of the child, and less desire is possible for any other considerations.

But at about fifteen years of age, just before the social development of the child, he experiences his second best susceptibility to religious appeal. God wants His social being controlled by Christ. Too many children are socialized without allegiance to Christ, and such social contacts are perilous. One pastor in a small, poorly churched community told me that nine of the last fourteen marriages he had performed were forced by premarriage relations, and that not one of the nine couples were members of any church. God says, give them their second great opportunity at fifteen years of age to declare allegiance to Christ and christianize their coming social relations. For those deciding earlier this period is a time of reconsecration.

At eighteen years of age, the youth is about to

develop rapidly intellectually, and the third great period of susceptibility is experienced, in order to assure a balanced mind and the christianizing of the intellect. It is dangerous to send a youth to college without first getting his decision of faith in and allegiance to Christ. These are the periods in the life of youth when God has made them most responsive to His appeal. We should work with God, not against Him by denying them attention at the most important period, twelve years of age, and the other periods if reached without an earlier decision.

The cold facts of religious experience prove the truth of the necessity of winning youth if most of them ever are to be won at all. The statistics proving that assertion are increasingly so common that we have heard none deny it. The more formative Evangelism of youth is practiced, the less will reformative Evangelism of older people be necessary. The more we work in season the less we will need to work out of season, and the easier, happier, and more fruitful it will be for all concerned.

XVII

SECURING POSSIBLE VISITORS

THE usual emphasis has been and is being put upon training classes for personal work, instead of guiding groups in actual personal work. Many have been trained, but few have actually put in operation what they have learned. I have gone to many churches where they told me courses in personal work were studied for a month or six months, yet only one in ten students actually attempted to win any one.

The more fruitful and less vitiating method is to have practice in winning people while studying. This makes a clinical, and not merely a theoretical study. Most study courses seem to make the student afraid to start. The tentative workers should be gotten together, and with some cautions and general principles enunciated during one good session, immediately sent out two by two to win people.

The fact is that the leading church members know far more about dealing with prospects than they realize, and when put to the task discover buried abilities suddenly emerging as the situation requires. Then, as the workers get together again at the supper conference, they report the wonderful experiences of the night before and lessons are drawn from these experiences to the profit of all. This method has proved that

it actually gets members to work in large numbers at once, who win large numbers of decisions, and develop themselves quickly in the experience.

The pastor makes a list of those members who ought to be planning to co-operate in the visitation work, not merely those whom he thinks might, but all those who apparently ought. The pastor should be very generous in assuming that unusual willingness will be manifested in prospective workers, in whom he can have unusual faith. The list should be made as complete as possible.

The extent of the work makes it necessary to expect many workers. Besides, many of the cold members, especially those in important positions in the church life, need the training and experience of this work. For their own sake as well as the sake of the prospective members, such tentative workers should be counted on for service and at least be given the opportunity to refuse. But little refusal will result if they receive the right invitation.

It is a distressing thing to meet some of the most able members after the work has begun, who have not been asked to co-operate, merely because they were misjudged as to their willingness, or ability, or the possibility of having the time. Besides, some of the most reticent workers can be partners of those with more vocal initiative. Business men with automobiles are especially needed. Put as many as possible of the young people of fourteen years old and up on the list. Several teams of boys and girls, and several of young men and of young women will do valuable work.

The pastor will bring this list to services previous to the week of visitation, and check off the names on it of those present. At the close of the meeting he will announce that the persons whose names are read are requested to tarry for a while in the front seats of the church. The pastor will then meet this group and explain briefly the fact that they have been honoured by this invitation to confer with the pastor, as he chose them as among those most interested in the Church. He will request them to meet for instruction in the art of talking with people relative to Christ and the Church, on Sunday afternoon at three o'clock sharp for a two-hour period of instruction.

If more than a week is to be given to visitation, this group may be asked to meet on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights for this instruction. But two solid hours of instruction on Sunday afternoon is preferable, because they can meet then much better than on three nights. They are requested to arrange their affairs so as to get this indispensable training and be at liberty to gather each night of the following week at a supper conference, in case they volunteer after instruction.

The pastor should make clear to this group that no one is being asked to be a friendly visitor during the next week until after being instructed as to what it is and how to do it. But he does expect that every member on this list will be willing at least to learn on Sunday all about this fine art of approaching people. When the instruction is over on Sunday and volunteers have signed to co-operate, the pastor can ask how many could appear at six o'clock, then how many at

six fifteen, and from this decide how early a majority of the workers can appear. The supper hour should be set as early as possible.

The leader will tell them that sacrifices and careful arrangement of their affairs will need to be made in order to give first place to this great effort which the church has been planning for so long. As faithful members, it should be assumed that this cream of the membership has reserved the visitation week as requested of all members weeks before. He will explain that men and women, no more intelligent or prepared or devoted than they, have been successful doing this work in other places, that it is a grievous sin to depreciate themselves in order to excuse their lack of faith and devotion, that only in rare cases will a reason which is not an excuse be given for not agreeing to attend on Sunday afternoon.

Then the leader will call for agreement to be present. "Those who cannot be present on Sunday for instructions, please raise your hand, while the pastor checks the name of any such." Most of the group will thus agree to be present on Sunday. At successive meetings at the close of the service the same treatment can be given to the balance of persons whose names have not yet been read.

Before Sunday every prospective worker should be signed up to attend on Sunday afternoon. There is a tendency to wait until Sunday morning to ask those who were not seen previously, but this is dangerous, as excuses will be ready, for not being able to attend the afternoon instruction class on such short notice.

Such persons should be seen personally Friday or Saturday; usually the pastor knows beforehand who are likely to be in this nonattending group, and they should be signed up during the day individually.

XVIII

TEACHING THE ART OF FRIENDLY VISITATION EVANGELISM

This being a group for instruction on Sunday afternoon, and not a public service, those present should be seated compactly with the leader directly in front of them. With only a suitable prayer from him, as from a class professor, he begins to cover the various elements of the instruction with pertinent comment.

Our visitation period of next week will be a time of concentration. "This one thing I do," must be a constant thought. All else that can, should be avoided. This will take all our thought, strength and time these few precious nights.

Every supper should be attended, for obvious reasons, such as the following: Those who miss the supper will miss vitally important reports and suggestions, as these begin while we eat. They will miss the spiritual strengthening of the fellowship. They must eat anyway, and it will take less time to eat together. Dissipation of visitation strength will be liable if the worker does not come directly to the supper conference.

These suppers will be different from the usual church supper. They will be like the Lord's last supper, and we will be sitting around the Lord's table. Jesus

habitually ate with folks. He knew the values of dining conferences, though the Pharisees often misunderstood Him on this matter.

No charge will be made to the visitors for the supper. They will be the guests of the other members who are not visitors, one-fifth of the nonvisitors being responsible through their leader for each supper. The five suppers combined only equal one regular-sized church supper.

The visitors should be acquainted with the various cards. These cards will be given out at the close of the period, as samples to be taken home and studied. The prospect card, which I am now holding up, is used to carry the data concerning each prospect, the leader explains. When the prospect has been actually interviewed, the team names of those calling should be inserted with the date of the call. A report of the visit should be inserted concisely and any recommendation that may help. Put nothing on a card, not even the team names, if no interview was possible. When the prospect decides, write "Won" over the face of the card in large letters.

This decision card has the various agreements on it which cover the needs of most prospects. The first agreement is, I desire to accept Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and Lord. This is for those who have never made a decision for Christ, those not in the membership of the Church. The second sentence is, I desire to become a member of ..... church, entering by ..... A prospect who has belonged to some other church will agree to the second declaration

only. The visitor should insert whether he is entering by letter, restoration, or baptism, or otherwise.

Acquaintance with the prospect is not necessary. Be friendly. You are friendly visitors. Act like a real friend. So behave that when you are gone they will say, "Wasn't that visitor friendly, I wish he would call again." Jesus liked the word, "friend." Friendliness will not lose its way.

Do not be censorious. You are not going out to judge people but to encourage people to do better. If we judge a person, our judgment is refuted; but if we do not, the person will judge himself very soon. An unwillingness to condemn does not mean a willingness to condone sin.

Be earnest, but not heavy. Have a cheerful soberness and a sober cheerfulness.

Nervousness, somewhat controlled, is an asset. The visitor without nerves, who has a steely boldness, will be repulsed by the same mood which he arouses in the prospect. Think of the nervousness of certain callers upon yourself, and how you were more considerate of them because of their nervousness. Then think of your lack of consideration of the other callers who were overbold. Undue nervousness will disappear when one gets into the conversation. The overnervous person will find this work a cure for that condition.

Do not overurge or weary the prospect. The decision will not be sincere unless made in a reasonable way. It should be remembered that the prospect needs Christ and the Church more than they need him. He

should realize he is being honoured by the visit and the invitation.

Be helpful. Helpfulness is the delicate touch of love. It is quite common for the visitor to be helpful in various ways in the homes where he or she goes. My partners have offered helps, in fixing radiators, getting persons better positions, giving advice on health matters, and in a hundred practical ways.

Be yourself. God can bless just you, when He cannot bless you in disguise. Be as natural as you are on all normal occasions. This is a normal occasion, do not make it abnormal by being unnatural.

Be sympathetic. Suffer with the prospect. Rejoice with the prospect. A yearning heart can win men better. Beecher used to say, "We must be endlessly, incredibly compassionate." We must hunger after righteousness in the prospect. This desire to see our prospect get right in making his decision for Christ and the Church kept us from seven forty-five P. M. to twelve thirty A. M. on one occasion. It was in a beautiful home with a strong-minded man, who needed to be helped to see the proposition through. It was a four and three-quarter hour visit, but that was not as long as the many years of neglect of the man. It won his decision, and the rejoicing of the visitors at the next supper indicated the value set on the decision. In all kinds of homes have occurred tragedies; with these we must be very sympathetic.

Be tactful. Tact is an evidence of sympathy. Recently a visitor with me told the man when he had made an excuse, " You are entirely inconsistent, and I

shall prove it." He may have proved it, but he did not win the man. The visitor did not get the instruction on this point, and so his propensity to assault folks kept him in a mean mood all evening. Another partner, when the young man said, if he joined any church it would be the First Church, immediately and brusquely exploded, "You are the assistant manager of the ——— and the manager belongs to that church. Is it a business reason that makes you prefer his church?" This was expressed with the satisfaction of a third-class detective who has caught the culprit. The young man clouded at the remark. I spoke a few conciliatory sentences and closed the conversation. He was in no mood for being won that night.

Watch your tones. Think of the tones of Jesus. What a soft, wooing tone He must have used when winning people. Keep your tones low and sweet and gentle. Your voice is sacred when in a sacred cause. Avoid harsh tones, light tones, and the tone of virtuous superiority. Quiet power and charm result from thoughtful tones. Enunciate clearly.

Select suitable language. Avoid the technical language of theology; it may be Greek to the uninitiated. At Pentecost every man heard the Gospel in his own language. The truth in your conversation should be embodied in the thought-forms of your present-day hearer. The truth behind many awkward and ignorant means of approach has often won folks in spite of the defects of approach in language and manner. How much more will the truth properly presented win men?

Embarrassing questions are avoided. Stick to the

invitation on the card. If a person asks me if he will not go to heaven if the decisions desired are not made, I tell him we have not come to discuss such a question. That must be settled in his own conscience. But we have come to invite him to decide for Christ and the Church.

Avoid stock phrases or evangelical expressions which the prospect may not understand or may associate with cant. The most helpful guide through a factory explains the details without using unnecessarily technical terms, and the guide to human souls must be wise and considerate in this respect. "It is in the suds of everyday speech that the starch of the schools must be washed out of the preacher's style," says Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, and this applies also to personal work.

Let your language convey vigorous, hopeful, uplifting ideas, suggestive of the best in the prospect. Do not speak ill of any one. Love is the universal language, which every one understands. Words fitly spoken "are like apples of gold in baskets of silver."

Be positive. Avoid negatives. Do not ask a person if he is a Christian. This assumes the least in him, not the best. Assume he is a Christian until he admits he is not. Rather say, "When did you decide for Christ?" Do not ask, "Do you belong to the Church?" but rather, "What church do you belong to?" Nor, "Are you interested in making a decision," but, "Of course you are desirous of deciding now." Not, "Have you thought about this?" but, "Of course you have thought about this on and off for many years." Visitors by training on this point have

radically changed their own attitude from a negative one to a positive one. The form of your questions helps to influence the mood of the prospect.

Do not argue. This is a golden rule in visitation. It saves from pitfalls. You are going out to reason, not to argue. Argument gets nowhere. Reasoning leads to conviction. Paul reasoned in the synagogues. He reasoned with Felix. In argument both sides are trying to prove their point. One person leads in reasoning, the other assents. When the other ceases to assent, the reasoning changes its direction or stops.

Conviction can only come upon assent. A business man said at a supper conference, " I never argue about anything with a person whom I respect."

Stick to the main subject, do not wander too much.

Be persistent. A young lady, who had been won, told me that it was the persistence of the two young women who won her that made her concentrate enough to decide. The man who sold my wife a washing-machine in our first pastorate, made several calls, and voluntarily did two washes for her before he sold it. Persistence is needed for the same reason that it is needed in every department of life, and especially where progress is made. I have three insurance policies, not because I went after them, not because I needed to believe in insurance, but because a barrage of persistence was needed to get me to act on what I did believe. Often the point of greatest resistance in the prospect is the time to be most persistent because he is convinced and nearest decision.

Do no force a "No." If you cannot get a "Yes,"

leave the matter open. People do not like to change their decision.

Every visit is a success, whether or not a decision is won, because in the spirit of Jesus we have done our best. Therefore, the prospect is left closer to Jesus and the Church because of our visit. That is success. We should not worry about results. Results are none of our business, but the business of the prospect. Our business is to do our best. Then results take care of themselves. This is very necessary to emphasize, else some of the workers will become discouraged through the sin of impatience at the failure to achieve the biggest success, a decision.

Do not apologize in any respect. The ambassador is strong because of the government behind him. Do not refer to a "little talk," or "a few minutes of your time," or "I hope we are not troubling you too much." Remember that you are doing them the greatest human favour that one person can do for another. We are on business for the King, with a message angels fain would bring. An apologetic attitude will lessen the dignity of your purpose in calling. You wish to speak with your prospect on a very important matter.

Do not tarry longer than thirty minutes, unless you have reason to believe that you are about to get the decision. This principle protects the inexperienced visitor. You will find it difficult to leave a house, but if four good visits are to be made in an evening it will only be possible by observing this rule. A longer visit is only justified by winning a decision or achieving real progress with a difficult case.

Retreat at once if company is present. The company will usually vitiate your work, and besides, it is not correct to broach such an important and personal matter in the presence of the company.

In the rare case of an unappreciative prospect, shorten the visit, do not press for decision, and try to leave him more sweetened and agreeable for a later approach. Jesus said something about casting pearls before unappreciative creatures.

Pray at the door as you ring the bell. I always pray for two things, the spirit of Jesus and somewhat of His wisdom. I feel that I am more the object of prayer than my prospect. In case of a decision I always pray before leaving the house, while all are standing, as spontaneously as possible. In case of the presence of several members of the family, especially children, I always direct them to take the hand of the one nearest and then we have a circle of prayer. But avoid thrusting prayers on your prospect. Do not pray at people. Embarrass no one.

Finish each case, if possible. Do not unnecessarily refer it to the pastor or some other visitor.

If children are among the prospects, begin with the youngest, and work up to the man of the house, if he is a prospect.

In the case of a ten- or twelve-year-old child, before asking for a decision tell the parents that an instruction class will be conducted by the pastor for all the boys and girls who decide for Christ and the Church, so that none will join the Church until properly prepared. Then get the decision from the child and the

permission of the parent before handing the decision card for decision. But get the card signed before approaching the next prospect.

Thus win your prospects separately, not collectively.

If you have only one prospect in a family, ask to see him alone.

Youth sixteen years and up should always be interviewed alone. If in a group of prospects, do not press them for decision.

Get to the decision as soon as possible, as most of the conversation will be based on that.

When it is time to suggest a decision, first hand the prospect a decision card properly checked according as he is expected to decide for Christ and the Church, or only in reference to the second agreement to come into the Church represented. Besides checking the statement or statements with a cross, fill in the manner in which the person is expected to enter the Church. With the card should be presented a pen. The person is asked to read the card. When he has done that, he is asked to sign it. If he is ready, he will, and no conversation is needed to secure the decision. Most prospects do not sign it at once, and so discussion of the proposition begins naturally at this point. Let the prospect hold the card until the interview ends.

When the card is signed, arrange for the candidate to appear at the church on some definite date and hour. Be there to introduce the prospect to the pastor and committee on candidates.

Fill out the prospect card, unobtrusively, after each visit. Make no oral reports. Anything worth report-

ing is worth writing down. Anything not written will not be remembered by the pastor anyway, because of the many cases involved.

Approach all prospects by asking about their relationship to the Church or Church School. Such questions should be put in a positive manner. Mooted questions should be avoided. Talking about their exact relationships with the Church in years gone by will get them in a mood for getting down to business in deciding for Christ and the Church.

A social approach is made before the discussion of Church relationship. This may involve one of a hundred mutual interests, from the picture on the wall, and business interests, to poetry and politics.

Return all prospect cards each night before going home. A light and a table will be available near a side entrance of the church until eleven o'clock. The pastor needs to study these cards and make re-assignments each morning. No assignments are arranged at the supper conference. No cards are pocketed.

Each team will need cards for at least eight calls, to assure an evening's work. Sometimes eight calls must be made to find several prospects at home or reachable.

Discover new prospects.

Every automobile will be needed and should be pledged on a card before Sunday night.

There should be but one name of a prospect on each card, to facilitate individual treatment.

Keep humming: "I'm here on business for the King."

Be more interested in this work than in your own business.

XIX

CONCERNING DECISION

I. REASONS FOR DECISION

THE fundamental reasons for decision should be kept before the prospect. These reasons are at the basis of most all other reasons.

A decision for Christ and the Church should be made because it is the right thing to do. It should be made even if the decision involved loss. This is the most unselfish reason to present and appeals to the noblest in the prospect. Practically every prospect has the belief that it is the right thing to do. But this consciousness of it being the right thing to do is often hazy and indefinite. The prospect must be reminded very definitely why it is right to make the decision. Several reasons are now suggested.

It is right to decide for Christ and His Church because every person needs both. The prospect needs Jesus as much as the visitor does. Men need personal salvation before they can influence others to have it. No person does his best until he has taken Christ for his Saviour from sin and guide in living. Each of us needs the best help we can get, and it is foolish to refuse Jesus, the best help of all. "No one cometh unto the Father but by me," said Jesus. By learning to swim a man protects himself and en-

ables himself to teach others to swim and to save the drowning.

It is a right decision because it increases the welfare of the loved ones of the prospect. No one can love his loved ones best until he has loved Jesus enough to obey Him and accept Him as Lord and Saviour. Every child in a Christian land deserves the birthright of a Christian father and mother who are sincere members of some church. Placing self aright with Jesus puts one in the finest relationship to his family. Mothers and fathers must be partners in the religious leadership of the home. When the time comes for parents to leave this earth, the richest legacy they can leave to their child is the memory of an active Christian father and mother.

It is a right decision because it blesses others in the community. Life is a co-operative effort. Every one is co-operating well or poorly. The man with Christ within him is the strongest unit of society. It is a matter of civic pride, of real patriotism as a citizen of the world, that one should link up with the Father of all in this intimate way through Jesus, His Son. People want Christians about them, they want to live in a community with a church. It is the right thing to do because, while there is every reason to do it, there is no good reason for not doing it.

The longer these facts are held before the mind of the prospect in simplicity and with intimacy, the more he will be led to act upon them.

Be sure the foundations of decision are considered well before the decision is made or recognized. Half

of lapsed membership is probably due to the wrong basis of entrance into the Church. Reasonable, but adequate content should be put into the meaning of decision to protect both the Church and the candidate from meaningless discipleship. Sacrificial motive in becoming disciples should have its paramount place, to assure a sacrificial church membership. Too many have accepted Christ and joined the Church to be saved, instead of desiring to be saved in order to serve.

II. THE GROWTH OF A DECISION

Decisions for Christ and the Church grow like decisions on all important matters grow. No one can trace all the details in the history of a decision. The history of decisions differ, though they may be grouped in types. One type would be outlined like this: Because of much selfishness there is antagonism, then indifference, then the conscience makes excuses, then comes interest, finally conviction, and yielding to Christ.

No tree falls at the first stroke, and the visitor must not expect too much response, though he should hope for the best response.

Many factors unknown to us and many unknown to the prospect enter into the making and the withholding of a decision. Our witnessing wins only when these factors in relation to the prospect permit. Therefore we do not know who will respond and often the visitor's preconceived judgment receives a surprising shock because some respond readily or others respond with difficulty. Our business, then, is to hope that all will

decide, do our best, and leave the result with all the determining factors.

We have also discovered this, that rarely, if ever, is a person the convert of one soul-winner. Many voices through many agencies have co-operated to prepare the prospect for the decision that we receive. "For herein is the saying true, One soweth and another reapeth! I sent you to reap that whereon you have not laboured: others have laboured and you have entered into their labour."

In a sermon during the week of edification in the First Baptist Church of Dayton, Ohio, with the pastor, Dr. Geistweit, behind me, I enjoyed telling the following account of a delayed decision. "In the campaign before coming here I was entertained at a fine home by one of the members. When the dinner was over the daughter played the piano, and the wife, husband, and I sang the songs together from a gospel song book. We sang almost every one from the beginning to the end of the book. The singing lasted for an hour and a half.

"As we began to converse, the husband told me of his fine business connections and how the Lord had blessed him. He had a business connection that millions of people would recognize. Then he asked me where I was going next, and when informed that it was here at Dayton, he said, 'I want to tell you about my religious experience. As a young man, I became wayward and roamed about the country. 'I dropped into a meeting and heard an evangelistic sermon by the pastor, who also sang a gospel song as a part of his

sermon. Years went by as I wandered about, and finally I was so discouraged at my failure in life that I contemplated ending my life.

" ' As I thus meditated, the words of that song the preacher sang rang in my ears and I couldn't get away from them. I began to think maybe the preacher was right and I ought to make one more try, and with Christ. This I proceeded to do, and the Lord has changed my life and blessed me wonderfully. That preacher was Dr. William H. Geistweit, and he doesn't know what he did for me.' " Nor did he know, for the congregation noted the shock of surprise as his name was disclosed. " Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days."

III. OBJECTIONS TO A DECISION

Most of the objections met in visitation Evangelism may be classified under two heads. Either the prospect thinks himself good enough without confession of Christ and membership in the Church, or else he thinks he is not good enough.

From those who think themselves good enough arises the first set of objections.

Membership is unnecessary. Why cannot a person be all right without belonging to the Church? As long as he does his best, that is enough. In answer we must remind him of the relation of the Church to Jesus, and point out that if Jesus loved it enough to die for it, we should love it enough to belong to it. One who would be a disciple of Jesus will want to associate in the fullest way with all other disciples. Only organized

Christianity accomplishes the real Christian task. Disunion in any department of life means failure to achieve a great purpose. The value of a Church to any community is recognized by all citizens, so that it is not only an obligation of discipleship to Jesus but of civic duty.

I am better than some members. This should be admitted, but it should be pointed out that some members are a low standard for a person to measure himself by. Jesus is not going to inquire if you were better than Tom Jones. If you are better than the best members, you are needed all the more to help them in their weakness. By this time the prospect will begin to admit he is not as good as all that.

I am good enough. You are good because there has been a Church. You were taught and nurtured in it in youth. You have been helped by the overflow of the life of the Church. However good you are, you could be better. Self-righteousness is really not goodness. It was the self-righteous men who killed Jesus. "I was a decent man, and the decent man is the hardest of all to convert," said a famous man looking back to the time of his conversion.

I work all week, and am tired on Sunday. Yes, so do all the church members. Jesus was a carpenter, and probably didn't have tools to ease labour, or union hours, but it was His habit to attend church every Sunday. If we care enough about Him and His people, we would think it worth while to attend the Sunday service. The more tired a person is the more he needs

Jesus. "Take my yoke upon you, and you shall find rest," said He.

I do not feel like it. The tasks of life are not performed through feeling but through conviction of duty. You ought to do it because it is right to do, even if you do not feel like it. We feel better after duty is done. The farmer had held out twenty-five years with this excuse. He was respectable, one of the best supporters of the church. He attended quite well. He was a prosperous farmer. I laboured with him for two hours on a Sunday afternoon. The pastor left the room thinking he would be offended.

Finally I asked the farmer if he ever woke up at four o'clock in the morning and didn't feel like getting up to milk his twenty-five cows. "About every morning," said he, "but it is my duty, so I get up." "And when your blood gets circulating and you smell the bacon and coffee from the kitchen, you feel better, don't you?" said I. "Sure," said he. "Then exercise the same logic in regard to accepting Christ and entering the Church." "That is good sense, let me sign that card." And he did, and came into the membership of the Church, bringing his eight-year-old daughter with him, whom he said wanted to enter with him when she knew of his intention.

The lodge is sufficient. No good lodge teaches that it is a substitute for the Church, and no good lodge member, if he thought twice, would suggest that the lodge is a substitute for the Church. The heart of the lodge is the Church within it.

There are hypocrites in the Church. No doubt that

is true. But there are more hypocrites outside of the Church. Jesus did not stop calling for new disciples because of men like Judas. The more men there are like Judas in the Church, the greater is the need for men who hate hypocrisy.

The Church has faults. Yes, so have the best institutions on earth. We do not give up family life, business life, lodge life, because of their faults. It is a wonder the Church has not more faults when you consider its size and its willingness to welcome the weakest of persons.

I want time to think it over. You have thought this over for years. If more time would help you, it were better not to discuss it now, but will further procrastination help you? The Bible always urges haste in doing a good thing. "Now is the acceptable time." "Now is the day of salvation." What do you want to think over? Let us do it together, now.

I shall do it voluntarily when ready. That sounds good, but if people did do that, we would not need to invite them and encourage them. They do not come without help. If you honoured our invitation to you enough, you would decide now. Your decision now is worth more than it can be next week, because it will be longer capitalized for Christ and His Church, just as money is worth more put at interest to-day rather than next year.

From those who think themselves not good enough, arises the second set of objections. These are not so many, because humility makes less excuses.

I am not good enough. You are not good enough,

nor are we, neither is any person good enough to be a Christian and to belong to the Church. That is why you should accept Christ. He came to help the sick, not the whole.

I cannot live up to it. Of course you cannot, but Jesus will help you, that is what He is for. "Suppose, Mr. Brown, that to-morrow morning the slush were a foot deep in the gutter and you could not cross without wetting your feet and having them so all day at work. If you could cross no other way, what would you do if a man in an automobile, seeing your dilemma, should drive up close to you and offer to carry you across, and maybe even to your work." "Of course, I would accept," said he. "Then why insult Jesus when He offers His help to see you through, if you are sincere in your desire to be a Christian?" He decided, as did also his wife, daughter and two sons. We held hands in a circle around the large table and prayed for Christ's help. On Sunday morning he said to me, after the service, "Mr. Cooper, I thank you for calling at my home Friday; it will mean much to my family."

XX

A DEMONSTRATION VISIT ON A TYPICAL FAMILY OF PROSPECTS

As my partner and I start for the next visit, being the leader of the team to-night, I carefully study the next assignment. I notice that the prospects are Mr. Smith, Mrs. Smith, Henry, eighteen years old, Mary, fourteen, and John, ten. Arriving at the house, I give the bell a good ring, while I pray for the spirit and somewhat of the wisdom of Jesus.

A young man of about thirty years comes to the door, and I assume he is not one of the prospects, so I inquire if Mr. or Mrs. Smith is at home. When he says they are, I continue, "We are from the Calvary Church and would like to speak with Mr. Smith and the family. May we step in." And, as I say that, I follow him into the hall as he is saying, "Why, certainly."

As he goes up-stairs to call Mr. Smith, we enter the living room, where the young folks are busy. Speaking to them cheerfully, we sit down in such position as to be facing our prospects when they assemble. Mr. Smith enters the room and we rise to greet him, telling him that we have called from the Calvary Church to see the family. I introduce myself and my partner. I inquire if Mrs. Smith is about, and Mr.

Smith tells Mary to go out into the kitchen and ask mother to come in. The family is now seated.

I begin with a social approach. "I noticed the picture of the young men in athletic costume as we entered the hall. Is one of them your son?" The father's face lights up as he says, "Why, yes; the one in the centre is Fred. It was taken at college." (He gets the picture and proudly points out Fred to both of us.) "Where is Fred now?" I ask. He pauses, and then with a strange note in his voice he says, "Fred died three years ago." My partner adds, "He was a member of our church." As I view the high calibre of the group, I venture, in faith, "Fred is in heaven." "Yes," joins in the mother, wiping a tear from her eyes, "if ever there was a good boy and faithful Christian, it was Fred."

I now am going to talk Church relationship. "Mr. Smith, of what church are you a member?" "Well, I'm sorry to say, of none." "You attend Calvary, I suppose?" "Not very often, and less now than formerly." "Did you always attend Calvary?" "No, mother here and I used to attend a Presbyterian church in New York. We went to Sunday School there. When I was about to drift from religious interests, I became interested in her, and even followed up the young people's meetings to be with her. They had a fine pastor, there. He married us."

Nothing so hallows and purifies the atmosphere and prepares the prospects for the real question as for them to talk about their own early church relationships. He continues, "But when we moved here we were

strangers and never got tied up with the church very strongly. The Baptist Church was the nearest, so we have sent the children there to Sunday School." "How did it happen that you never professed Christ nor joined the Presbyterian Church back in New York?" I inquired. Then he tells me of having put the matter off for various reasons.

I pursue the same line of inquiry in a modified way with Mrs. Smith and learn that she joined a Methodist church in the town where they had lived a short time before coming here.

I now call John to come and sit upon my knee, which he does. "Who is your Sunday School teacher, John?" I ask. He tells me and admits, when I ask, that he loves Jesus, and wants to obey Him. His confession is blessing the whole family. I now refer to the pastor's instruction class for boys and girls who wish to confess Christ and become members of the church. I ask the parents if they are willing that John make his decision on condition that he enter the instruction class before actual membership. They express their appreciation of that training and gladly assent.

I then check and fill in the decision card and hand it to John, reading it with him, and telling him if he agrees to what it says, to sign it. While he is signing it, I am placing similarly prepared cards, filled in while Mr. Smith has been talking, in the hand of each member of the group, asking them to read them. The card in their hand aids them in concentration.

I next give Mary the treatment given to John, modi-

fied, and without calling for the assent of the parents. She decides. Then I suggest to Henry that he sign his card. But Henry demurs, and I do not press him before the family. The mother is very willing, and signs. The father hesitates, realizing well the new obligations which it entails, and is counting the cost.

It is helpful to refer to Fred, and the advisability of coming with mother, and leading the children, et cetera. Finally, with real effort, he makes his decision, and when the card is signed, he seems to relax, a new light comes into his face. He is a changed man. Mother is a reconsecrated woman. John and Mary are quietly and sweetly realizing their new and dignified partnership with the church members in being Christians. The father tells me that he will try to win the son who let us in, but has gone out. He encourages Henry to sign also, but Henry curtly says, "No, not now."

We rise to go, and all are naturally standing in a circle, so I say, "Johnny, give me your hand, take Mary's; Mary, you take Henry's; Henry, take mother's; mother, take dad's hand; dad, take my partner's hand; and I'll take his. Mr. Smith, I may never be in your home again, and so while we hold hands together, I want to pray my heart's desire for this dear family, and then my partner will pray also." I recall in my prayer, the testimony of Fred, the decision of each member present, Henry's hesitation, and the son who is absent.

Then my partner prays. He is not used to this. It will mean much to him. He prays simply, as I did. It is a better prayer, it is more of a layman's prayer,

it touches their hearts; I can feel it. He ends his prayer. A tear is in every eye, but a tear of joy, with satisfaction in the heart and peace on each face. Henry signs his card and hands it to me. I cannot help giving Johnny and Mary a good hug in parting, and with warm clasp and the simple " Thank you " of the parents, we go out into the night.

XXI

THE WORKERS AT WORK

I. SECURING THE VISITORS

At the close of the instruction period volunteer cards and pencils, having been placed in numerous plates before the period began, will be circulated through the group. Each person will take a pencil and a card. Then the leader asks the members of the group to sign their name and check each of the next five nights, indicated on the card. Not a night should be unchecked if it can be possibly avoided. Most of the group will sign up for the week. Men are to go in pairs and women in pairs. The pastor does the pairing each day in the morning. Partners will change each night. Each visitor will thus learn from five other visitors. The pastor will take a different leading member each night to help train him better by example.

II. THE NECESSITY OF THOROUGH ORGANIZATION

Attention to details is an essential of every work of art. Indefiniteness must be absent. The week's program must be mapped out with rigid precision. Any slipshod work on the leader's part will be detected by the workers, whose morale will suffer because of it.

System is as necessary in this work as in all the other important work of the world. Nothing can be

promoted or perpetuated unless it is organized. Hit-or-miss method in the leader will breed the same in the workers.

In a few hours of the previous week the pastor will have set up his work table for the laying out of the prospect cards. Over a table at least three by five feet long, is laid white paper. On this paper should be marked off from ten to fifty sections of the territory to be covered by the workers. This is done roughly. Some sections may have few prospects in them, others many. Number each section.

Then take the prospect cards and clip together the cards of each family. Then place all the cards in the sections where they belong.

On Monday morning four hours should be spent in pairing off the workers who are pledged for Monday night, and arranging their assignments of cards.

Various considerations will suggest themselves in this process.

Then eight more or less selected cards, or groups of family cards, should be put in an envelope for each team, with the team name written on it. This will assure eight visits each night for each team.

At six fifteen P. M. sharp, the leader should tap his plate and call all who have arrived to gather about the table. He will not wait for all to appear, but work on scheduled time. He will ask a layman to offer grace and then they should begin eating. As latecomers see that the supper began on time they will improve in their punctuality if possible.

The table will only have as many chairs about it as

the number of those who pledged to come. It is bad psychology to have empty chairs. The leader should place these chairs personally each afternoon and instruct those who serve not to alter them. Flowers will be on the table.

By six thirty the leader will review the instruction of the Sunday afternoon session, by asking questions. At six fifty o'clock sharp he should read an appropriate passage of Scripture and offer prayer. The workers will be told to let the person whose name appears first on the envelope be the leader of the team. He will also announce that all cards are to be returned, with the blank decision cards each night; that a light and a table will be provided until eleven P. M. inside the side door. No card will be held over night.

At seven P. M. sharp the pastor calls the team names, and those indicated will come and get their assignments and leave at once.

On Tuesday night and the nights following, the pastor will come with fresh assignments made that morning all ready in his hand-bag. He will announce at six thirty P. M. the results of the last evening, and then call on those who won some one the night previous, according to his list, to tell exactly the steps in getting the decision. These reports constitute the program each night. At seven P. M. the new teams will be announced after Scripture reading and prayer, and the workers will secure their fresh assignments and go forth.

III. THE CONFESSIONS OF THE FRIENDLY VISITORS

Definite decisions are reported each night. The

Lord thus honours the definite doing of visitation work.

Many decisions are reported by weaker teams. These teams are strengthened by this experience.

The reports and the actual experience are the best kind of training in winning people.

The common report is that the prospects were unexpectedly friendly and that the visitors had difficulty in leaving most homes. Prospects who may resent an intelligent approach are very rare, and of these few most come to an appreciation of the visit before it ends.

The visitors confess to a searching of their own hearts as they spoke to others. A judge arose in one of our efforts and said at the start, "The visits last evening did more for me than for our prospects; it was a time of appraisal as to just where I stood with Christ." Most of the officers confess the weakness with which they went at the work, but testify as to their growing faith and loyalty to the method.

The report is made of the new appreciation of the church in the community because it cares enough about winning people to actually go to them.

The workers are honoured for their courage and faith in doing the work.

The workers report a new appreciation of their partner.

Partners who went out as silent partners now have confidence to lead a team.

They report a better knowledge of their community.

They report a better knowledge of their church from the reactions of the prospects as expressed to the visitors.

They report a new and finer understanding of the relation of Jesus to people.

They report the educational value of the interviews. They learn from the prospects.

They report a dynamic building up of their own personality.

Touching scenes are pictured that stir the hearts of the visitors at the table.

The expression is heard, "What a loss to our members that they could not share the blessed experiences we had last evening."

The sheer joy of the work is the most dominant note in the reports. Radiant faces echo the memory of sacred scenes. There is a new charm from these fascinating experiences. Members have heard of happy conversions, but now they have gone through the waters and brought forth saved souls. There has been a wealth of unveiled glories. The splendours of redeeming grace have beautified their lives afresh. Harvest time is always a season of rejoicing. "They that go forth weeping, sowing seeds, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bearing precious sheaves." The common expression toward the close of the week in the usual effort, from outstanding pastors and laymen, is, "This has been the happiest week of my life." One business man wanted me to include a whole chapter in this book on the joy of winning people. The song of the saint can and must be more attractive than the song of the sinner.

These are some of the confessions of friendly visitors at work. Each item might be covered by a book.

XXII

THE FRUITAGE OF THE EFFORT

The fruitage of visitation Evangelism is usually considered phenomenal. But it is explained simply in that it is downright hard work by many persons in carrying out the main New Testament evangelistic program.

In the court of final appeal, the witness of results, the evidence of good results, and the lack of evidence of bad results, is what counts among intelligent Christians.

It is the common testimony that no bad reactions are caused by the effort, because of the absence of any extravagances. Every step is guarded by a thorough leader.

There is a maximum result of values because of the maximum of intelligent effort expended. Certain qualities of leadership are developed in the visitors, so that the pastor counts that value as justifying the entire effort. A new confidence also comes to the whole church. The hearty endorsement of the effort by all connected with it assures a wholesome aftermath.

The results prove that any person utilizing one hour a day in really trying to win new disciples will have large results. In the average church where a director of visitation Evangelism leads, in twelve hours, thirty workers in teams of two usually win about seventy-five

new disciples. This indicates the fearful waste when millions of Christians remain inactive in this respect.

In one state the author was privileged to work one season with one denomination. Twenty personally conducted efforts in churches from the smallest to the largest resulted in the winning by these churches of sixty per cent of the total accessions of the one hundred churches in the state. Some of the other eighty churches were stimulated by the news of the work of the twenty churches.

A booklet of appreciations of visitation Evangelism, as conducted by the author, can be obtained at Andover for a nominal charge of ten cents. This is the most useful and interesting help a pastor can have in arousing his members to desire lay Evangelism. The contributors to the booklet include many nationally known pastors.

The values of visitation Evangelism are being recognized by Christian leaders gradually. Dr. Goodell says, " Far greater results in ingathering have been accomplished through this method than through the usual great tabernacle meetings or by vocational evangelists of proved ability and devotion."

XXIII

THE CULTURE OF THE CONVERTS

The lack of culture of the converts is no fault of the method of winning them if they do not hold out. The consensus of opinion of those who have lived with the converts is that the average number who remain faithful is greater among those won in this way than through the public method. They are hand-picked, not windfalls.

A pastor with whom I ha[illegible]en two years previously said recently, "Of the one hundred and five new members received from our visitation effort, eighty-five are still functioning." He did not say how many had died or had moved away. The usual lasting quality of the converts as a whole is such that pastors who have had a real experience in the method, seek no other for large accessions.

One of the best demonstrations which we know of the lasting value of personal winning of disciples is the record of the First Presbyterian Church of Seattle. The last report gave it 10,000 members. It has steadily grown from a membership of 400 through the individual method, under the instruction of its pastor, Rev. Mark Matthews. Every new member promises to engage in personal work. Such is the present-day possibility of apostolic effort in Evangelism.

The new members must be encouraged and trained in all good work. A woman said to me once, upon hearing of the large number of decisions in our campaign, "Do you think they will all hold out?" Because I knew of her unwillingness to do anything to help win them, I said, "If all the members ask that same question in the same tone of voice, I do not think they will hold out." "What do you mean?" said she. "I mean that if new-born chicks are put into a refrigerator they will die," I explained. She smiled and admitted the point.

The real quality of a church is largely determined by its capacity to absorb new personalities. The church is as much on probation as the new members. Both should be thoroughly taught their mutual obligations.

Real desire to culture the converts will find many ways of doing it.

A church never suffers from getting too many new members, but many are suffering from lack of them. Usually the church member who worries most about the behaviour of the new members is doing the least to confirm them in the faith. Said Dr. Brougher to an official who had said, "Pastor, too many members are coming into this church," "Well, Deacon, you needn't worry. God will never blame you."

There should be classes of instruction for converts arranged in advance. They can be best absorbed and nurtured by those who won them. Harvests do not care for themselves.

Work each convert into some organization of the

church. The family group system will aid in keeping in touch with every member.

Have a program of welcome and training that is not merely a series of entertainments. Yet the reception must be as happy as that given the prodigal son, even though an elder brother disapprove.

Make your own analogy between the care of a human baby and a spiritual infant. It should be remembered that all children are active and want to help; give the converts something to do.

The bigger the activity of a concern, the greater the gains. Because some evangelistic gains are apparently temporary, we should not refuse the gains that will be permanent. Some preachers never have any backsliders because they never win any one. Whoever seeks to win a considerable number of converts, must realize at the start that he is laying himself open to the criticism of winning some who may not be faithful.

A wealthy man offered General Booth a substantial check on condition it should not be used in evangelistic work. "Why?" "I do not believe in it." "On what grounds?" "It is not satisfactory work; look at all the backsliders you have." "Do you know the difference between a house kept by two old maids and a great hotel?" The rich man looked puzzled and could not quite see the connection.

"Well, I shall tell you," said Booth. "In the house of the old maids they know how many spoons they have, cups, saucers, plates, in place and precise! One day Mary Ann, washing the tea things in the kitchen, suddenly lets a cup slip through her soapy fingers, and

it smashes on the floor. Poor Mary Ann! Miss Lavinia and Miss Isabella come into the kitchen and hold up their hands in horror. A cup broken! Dear, dear, dear! Preposterous! Awful! Poor Mary Ann is called wicked, careless and threatened with loss of her job as she decidedly shall not stay here.—In a great hotel they break things every day, but look at the business they do! " As the thought struck home, with a smile the rich man withdrew his reservation.

XXIV

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH—THE EXPECTATION OF JESUS

The expectation of Jesus is that every church will be evangelistic.

The evangelistic church will not be satisfied with a makeshift policy. As the visitation week draws to a close the friendly visitors will suggest keeping up the visitation. If this desire is honoured by the leadership of the church, there will be no cessation of evangelistic work.

This reaction of the visitors indicates the value of a vitally successful effort in visitation Evangelism under expert leadership. It is an experimental training school for the pastor and the church. It is the quickest way to get a church profoundly evangelistic. More will be done in one week under proper leadership to indoctrinate, exercise, and win people, than in years of suggesting, harangueing, or scolding. The solution has been to quit talking about Evangelism and instead to take a group of willing members, and to train them, privately and quickly, to go out and win people.

Now that the Church is evangelistic and intends to remain evangelistic, the policy of New Testament Evangelism must be carefully guarded.

The evangelistic church will insist on having a pastor

who is evangelistic in the fullest sense. A new pastor may ruin all that has been done and prevent further expansion.

The evangelistic pastor will preserve and increase the list of prospects. He will be able to refer to any prospect on a moment's notice. Assignments will regularly be made to visitors, and reports will be expected.

Consecration, Concentration, and Continuation will be watchwords.

Once a year at least courses in Evangelism will keep the members in good evangelistic condition.

The pastor will work with his members, not for them. He will be a true "overseer." An overseer in the New Testament sense is one charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly. The pastor will show his fellow-Christians how to grow in Christ, by example and precept.

But they must grow themselves and win others themselves if they are to be true Christians. The pastor cannot grow for them or do their winning for them. Thus the spirit of Evangelism in a church will be embodied in its members. They will know how to hold members because they knew how to win them. Rivers of living water shall flow from this church.

Young men will go from it into the ministry. They will encircle the earth. Their voice will be heard around the world. They shall be the actual leaven to help purify the world.

This church will minister to its community, and the community will flow into it. In the grip of a sacri-

ficial spirit, there will be a new plenty, for there will be more to give.

There will be a harmonious adjustment of all the problems that constantly arise.

There will be a crescendo of power in the truly evangelistic church.

There is nothing ill that long can dwell in such a temple.

This will be the evangelistic Church expected by Jesus.

Printed in the United States of America

DATE DUE

FEB 1 5 1973

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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

269
C778

Cooper, Raymond Westervelt.

AUTHOR

Modern evangelism.

TITLE

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C778 Cooper, Raymond Westervelt.
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